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- II. *Policy:* The editors will welcome contributions that are likely to be helpful in the furtherance of the aims set forth above. It will be required of such contributions that they be frank and fair in their discussion of moot questions; that they be free from controversial animus; and that their contents be of real scholarly and practical value to the readers. Difference of opinion between contributors, or between a contributor and the editors, does not of itself exclude articles from publication since the editors do not hold themselves responsible for the opinions of contributors.

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CONTENTS

THE PLACE OF THE SERMON IN PUBLIC WORSHIP	<i>Henry H. Bagger</i>	195
ROMAN CATHOLIC MAGISTERIUM AND THE ANALOGY OF BEING, ...	<i>Niels C. Nielsen, Jr.</i>	213
JOHN STAUPITZ ON GOD'S GRACIOUS LOVE	<i>John Joseph Stoudt</i>	225
HERESY AND THE LUTHERAN CHURCH	<i>Robert Paul Roth</i>	245
FAITH AND FACTS	<i>Martin J. Heinecken</i>	253
KEEPING THE FAITH ABREAST WITH THE TIMES	<i>Raymond T. Stamm</i>	258
CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMENT		
For You and for Many—Yes, Both	<i>James P. Berg</i>	268
BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES		
Ferm, ed., <i>Dictionary of Pastoral Psychology</i> (George H. Muedeking)		272
Hulme, <i>How to Start Counseling</i> (George H. Muedeking)		272
Lauterbach, <i>Ministering to the Sick</i> (David Belgium)		273
Oates, <i>Anxiety in Christian Experience</i> (William E. Hulme)		274
Finegan, <i>Clear of the Brooding Cloud</i> (William C. Berkemeyer)		274
Kauffman, <i>The Challenge of Christian Stewardship</i> (Clyde J. Grimstvedt)		275
May, <i>Protestant Churches and Industrial America</i> (G. Everett Arden)		275
Preus, ed., <i>Norsemen Found a Church</i> (Paul C. Nyholm)		276
Zwingli and Bullinger (Paul C. Nyholm)		277
Runes, ed., <i>Treasury of Philosophy</i> (Stanley L. Olsen)		277
Harkness, <i>Foundations of Christian Knowledge</i> (T. A. Kantonen)		277
Garnett, <i>Religion and the Moral Life</i> (Stanley L. Olsen)		278
Casserley, <i>The Bent World</i> (Karl Hertz)		279
Bauman, <i>To See Peter</i> (Henry P. Suhr)		280
Lindemann, <i>Martin Luther</i> (Walter G. Tillmanns)		281
Wallis, <i>Young People's Hebrew History</i> (John V. Halverson)		281
Bauman, <i>To See Peter</i> (Henry P. Suhr)		282
DeWolf, <i>A Theology of the Living Church</i> (James J. Raun)		282
Bonhoeffer, <i>Life Together</i> (James H. Hanson)		284
Berstl, <i>The Cross and the Eagle</i> (R. W. Lutnes)		285
Mand, <i>The Unfaithful</i> (R. W. Lutnes)		285
Parrot, <i>The Flood and Noah's Ark</i> (J. M. Myers)		285
Parrot, <i>The Tower of Babel</i> (J. M. Myers)		285
Bowman, <i>The Drama of the Book of Revelation</i> (John M. Ness)		286
Flew and Macintyre, eds., <i>New Essays in Philosophical Theology</i> (J. D. Garhart)		287

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The Place of the Sermon in Public Worship

BY HENRY H. BAGGER

THE prime importance of worship in the life of the church has been vigorously phrased for us by Willard Sperry. "So long as the church," he writes, "bids men to the worship of God and provides a simple and credible vehicle for worship it need not question its place, mission, and influence in the world. If it loses faith in the act of worship, is thoughtless in the ordering of worship, and careless in the conduct of worship, it need not look to its avocations to save it. It is dead at its heart, and no chafing of the extremities, producing what Carlyle called 'quaint, galvanic sprawlings,' will bring back the life that has left it."¹ Wilhelm Stählin speaks of worship as "the kernel of all ecclesiastical life."² Complementing the concern of these two for the life of the church, Luther D. Reed asserts: "For the great body of believers, corporate worship is more significant and constructive than any other single factor in their Christian experience."³ There is, therefore, every reason for us to bring our best mind to bear on the matter of worship and the various issues related to it. One of these, our present concern, is the place of the sermon in the service of worship.

We begin by noting that, in the worship of the church, preaching has from the earliest times been a vital part. We need not review its full history. We need only recall that, from the days of the pre-Christian synagogue, the specific interpreting of religious truth has been a normal element in the service. Practiced by Jesus and Paul and the apostles and their successors, it stands as one of the rich bequests of the New Testament church to the church of today. To the point is Werner Elert's comment that "if it can at all be said that Luther reached back beyond the Middle Ages to the ancient church, this was especially true in his restoration of preaching to an important and central place."⁴

1 W. L. Sperry, *Reality in Worship* (New York, 1925), p. 168.

2 W. Stählin in *The Ecumenical Review*, April, 1952, p. 243.

3 L. D. Reed, *The Lutheran Liturgy* (Philadelphia, 1947), p. 10.

4 W. Elert, in *The Lutheran Quarterly*, May, 1955, p. 172—quoted and translated from the *Informationsdienst der VELKD*, Jan., 1955.

But as this reference to "restoration" makes clear, the place of the sermon has not always been assured or maintained. It is common knowledge that after the sixth century preaching in the Roman Church almost died out. That at other times in the life of the church preaching has been carried to extremes of emphasis, length, and plain volubility can hardly be denied. Yet that the preaching of his Word would seem to be one of the "crown rights of the Redeemer," to use an arresting phrase of John Whale's in another connection, and that it must have a central part in public worship if we are to be true to our history seems beyond serious question. The particular hour in which we live would seem to demand it as well. What period in history has seen a smaller world or larger problems, together constituting a most insistent call that the Word of God be brought to bear thereon in all its truth and power!

Nevertheless, this matter of the place of the sermon in the service of worship is not unchallenged today. But few laymen and not too many clergymen have sensed the fact. Most would no doubt be ready to question it. Yet the more closely one studies the church of today, the more one realizes that, with of course notable exceptions, there has been a waning interest in the sermon and a decline in the power of the pulpit. Even if the problem is only "becoming," it is well that we should anticipate it. Nor is the issue simply an academic one. It concerns us all, and it needs to be faced that there are, in America as well as in Europe, persons and forces that would look in the direction of greatly down-grading the sermon if not actually ruling it out. Certain of these forces reflect the times in which we find ourselves. The speeding up of the tempo of life, the lessened appreciation of the art of public address, the competitive appeal of new media of entertainment, the popular lack of a biblical background—all these have not helped protect the place of the pulpit or the status of the sermon.

Perhaps certain influences for which we as preachers are more directly responsible have played an even larger part in putting preaching on the defensive against question or attack. An editor of *The Christian Century*, writing of the pulpit today, rather caustically challenges us to "think of what is done with the church's main chance: vapid pep-talks, arid skull sessions, half-baked politics, half-cooked therapies, little Bible stories that completely miss the point of the Bible, outmoded, discredited stereotypes. This is our preaching, by

and large.”⁵ We may not find all this to our liking, but it does not seem too much to say that relatively low standards do prevail and that little “great” preaching, percentage-wise, marks our day. Imagine yourself stranded in almost any of our moderately large cities of a Sunday. With what likelihood of meeting more than mediocre preaching can you seek out the churches of even the best-spoken preachers? Or, if you attend a Lutheran service of worship led by the old and comfortable word that in a Lutheran Church you can be sure of one thing—you will get a Gospel sermon—are you even as sure of this as once you were or can you count on that Gospel sermon to have freshness of either insight or outlook? That there may be reasons for all this is true. Preachers are busy with many other things; some may deliberately have relegated their preaching to second place; others may slight its importance unconsciously, having lost faith in the Word itself or in its effectiveness, convinced that preaching is indeed “foolishness.” The sermon may also have been conceived by still others to be an end in itself, which it is not, and so it has quite properly fallen short. Whatever the reason, much of present-day sermonizing amounts to little more than bald moralism or mere improving discourse. Too often and too largely a constant urge to sanctification with little or no proclamation or setting forth of God in Christ, it has to many and in many cases become appalling rather than appealing.

It must be admitted, too, that some men who might have been expected to speak for preaching as a potent part of public worship have decried it. Dean Inge is quoted as feeling that to try to get anything across to a congregation by preaching to it is like trying to fill a shelf of long-necked bottles by throwing a bucket of water over them.⁶

Granting all this, however, it would seem that a much more basic reason for the lessened esteem in which preaching is held today may be found in the different conceptions which are held of what worship really is and in the labors of certain liturgical movements that have been increasingly influential. Etymologically, ^{in English} worship roots in the thought of “worth-ship”—particularly the worthship of our Lord and Maker which, in one way or another, it is desired to declare and of which it is desired to express our appreciation. While worship may of course be private as well as public, what is before us is that expression

5 *The Christian Century*, April 27, 1955, p. 494.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 493.

of it which concerns the people of God assembled to express their devotion in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving and to assert together their intention "to serve God by proclaiming together his worthiness to be served."⁷ Whether actually accompanied by sacrifice, as in the days of the temple or as proclaimed by the Roman Church, it is looked upon by some as primarily sacrificial in its essential character, calling for the "lifting up of our humanity to God" and "the concentration of all faculties upon giving glory to God."⁸ For them, going to church to worship is more a matter of expressing the religion they already have than of seeking to get more.

Under this view worship partakes of the nature of a one-way street having as its goal, to which all else is subordinated, an all-consuming adoration. Under it the reading of God's Word becomes an adoring sacrifice, a paying of tribute due; the sermon has practically no part or place except as it expresses the witness and adoration of the people or except as the very act of listening to it is looked upon as being sacrificial in nature; and the Holy Communion becomes a supreme act of worship on the part of the worshiper, a eucharistic sacrifice, or a memorial, but largely minus any sacramental meaning. All is done unto God, and thus objectively to worship him becomes the *summum bonum*.

It is our contention, however, that worship must be more broadly conceived and is indeed more broadly conceived by those who understand either the ancient church or the Lutheran church aright. As earlier implied, it is necessary to recognize that from the beginning Christian worship made room for the synagogue with its service of instruction and not only for the temple with its emphasis on sacrifice, and that the minister is by inheritance both rabbi and priest. Thus viewed, worship is both an opening up of the heart and an outpouring of the heart—a breathing in as well as a breathing out, to use a metaphor of Wilhelm Stählin.

Regarded in this way, the service of worship is a two-way street with man continuing to offer himself and his praises and his substance unto God, but with God continuing to speak to man and meeting and

7 G. Hedley, *Christian Worship* (New York, 1953), p. 2.

8 J. H. Srawley, *The Liturgical Movement* (1954), p. 13, discussing Herwegen's *Christliche Kunst und Mysticism*; O. S. Tomkins, *The Church in the Purpose of God* (1952), p. 48, discussing the report of a Commission on Ways of Worship preparatory to the Lund World Conference on Faith and Order.

communing with his spirit. Under this conception, while adoration has its place in and through prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, the reverent reading of his Word and the proclamation of his Gospel through the sermon are truly of the essence of our worship. The sacrament of the altar still stands as altogether significant, as a sacrament sealing and applying God's forgiving grace to each individual partaker, being administered to each rather than celebrated by each. The whole service is one in which not only man is active before God, who is passive and receptive and objectively adored, but a service in which God, too, is active. Thus the service becomes as Joachim Beckmann describes it, "a meeting of the Lord, acting in Word and sacrament through the Holy Spirit, with his church."⁹ It is God serving the congregation of his saints as well as his congregation serving him. Holding the sacrificial view, one would seem to be able to grant the sermon but little place. Holding the two-way view, one must regard the sermon as of very great importance. The paradox of today is, however, that the churches of the Reformed group, which view worship as primarily sacrificial, are nevertheless the ones for whom preaching seems to count for the most, while the churches holding the more sacramental view of worship are the ones among whom the place of the sermon is being questioned and thrown into jeopardy.

It has been stated quite bluntly that certain liturgical movements have been influential in the direction of demoting the importance and position of the sermon in the worship of the church. It would seem necessary to support that contention. It is not too difficult to do so, and we find an excellently objective article of 1933 proving suggestive and helpful.¹⁰ It deals with the liturgical movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in broad, generic terms. Yet it is sufficiently specific to serve our needs. Interest in the mystical element of worship, as represented in Rudolf Otto, is cited. It is noted, too, that one of the definite aims set down by the High Church Union of Germany was that there should be "less emphasis on the sermon, greater attention to the meaning of the sacraments and their objective character—the indispensable supposition is their performance, or accomplishment, according to the churchly Orders—and a richer liturgical form for the services." Closely related thereto stood the "High-church-

9 Joachim Beckmann, in *The Lutheran Quarterly*, Aug., 1955, p. 265.

10 George R. Seltzer, in *The Lutheran Church Review*, Oct., 1933, pp. 371-395.

ecumenical Alliance" which also strove for "the recognition of the objective character of the holy sacraments" and "restoration of the ancient liturgy of the church, especially of the Holy Eucharist as the head and crown of the Christian cultus." A participant in the High Church Union is quoted as describing the type of service developed in the following terms: "It is the adoration of Christ who is present; the real presence is brought about through the High Mass, as the high-churchmen call the Lord's Supper; through the Eucharist, as they also say; through the Sacrifice, as is frequently declared with emphasis." It is noted also that P. Hansen, one of the members of the Union, actually makes use of the phrase *ex opere operato*. In defense of all this, Oskar Johann Mehl is quoted as pointing out that the liturgy is "a sacred performance, . . . a noble display of the congregation before the countenance of God." Finally, for we are yet in Germany, attention is drawn to the Berneuchen Conference, with reference to which Otto Dietz by way of criticism writes, "I cannot forbear: I find in the Berneuchen order for the Lord's Supper nothing more than a symbolic act which glorifies the earthly, . . . for surely the sacrament is more than the bringing of sacrifice by men."

In similar fashion, though much more briefly, the article reports the liturgical interest in Sweden, in Great Britain (where the Oxford Movement, soon one hundred twenty-five years behind us but living on in the Anglo-Catholic party, has had such great influence), and in other countries as well. Coming to our own country, the increasingly liturgical practice of non-Lutheran communions is noted and particular attention given to the major developments among Lutherans, beginning with the Church Book which preceded the Common Service in 1888 and led to the Common Service Book of 1917. Related individual and group efforts are listed, and the concerns of the then new and active Society of St. Ambrose and Society of St. James are mentioned (although the organizations are not referred to by their names). In testimony to the objectivity which pervades the article, it must be remarked that there is also a digest of various liberalizing movements within the Anglican communion, the Roman Church, and among Lutherans. In conclusion, there is a wholesome emphasis on the need of balanced progress and the avoidance of extremes, whether in the direction of freedom or of form, and a plea for a worship that, while it is historic and churchly, is both evangelical and vital.

That the liturgical movements reported for us as of 1933 have continued somewhat along these same lines has been evident to every observer of the life of our church. Particular mention has been made by Abdel Ross Wentz of the fact that at the Second Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation in Hanover, in 1952, the claim was made by Peter Brunner, of Heidelberg, that the Sacrament of the Altar is primarily a service of thanksgiving. In this he was backed by Professor Mahrenholz, chairman of the Commission on Liturgy of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany, who went on to declare the entire service of worship a thanksgiving service. This has now been followed by a vigorously debated report of that same Commission on Liturgy at the meeting of the U.E.L.C. in Braunschweig in October, 1954. Such was the character of that report that Professor Werner Elert, Bishop Hanns Lilje, Professor Knolle, Professor Sommerlath, and others gave earnest counsel that the church be on its guard lest the preaching function be slighted, the idea gain ground that the sermon has outlived its day, and the sermon be demoted in the interest of the liturgy. After remarking, "We are today given the impression that worship in the ancient church was quite exclusively liturgical—as we still find it, for example, in Eastern Orthodox churches," Dr. Elert quite pointedly declared: "The impression has gone abroad, and our liturgiologists are at least partly to blame for this, that the preaching, teaching church is to be replaced in some sense by the liturgical church."¹¹

The liturgical movement in America, as marked among us Lutherans, evidences some of these same tendencies to down-grade the place of the sermon in the service of worship. Thus, one of the values cited not infrequently in favor of the historic liturgies is that their use tends to co-ordinate the elements of worship and, quite particularly, to reduce the sermon's importance if not indeed to subordinate it. Moreover, the proponents of the historic liturgies seem to be one in exalting the sacrament of the altar to a position quite out of proportion to everything else and frequently give it something of a sacrificial interpretation. Thus one reads in one text, "The Eucharist has always been the high point of the worship of the faithful in the chief service of the church. . . . From its very institution, the sacrament was primarily a

11 *Op. cit.*, pp. 172, 173.

thanksgiving. . . ."¹² The same writer refers to the Strassburg Order of 1524 as "a Reformation Order of the highest type" and mentions, with what seems but little concern, the fact that it does not include a sermon. What makes it "of the highest type" is that it does include more of the elements of the Canon than many of the other early Lutheran orders. (What different estimates may be put upon that virtue becomes clear when one recalls the Philadelphia Convention of the United Lutheran Church in America in 1948 and the debate on the proposed Eucharistic Prayer!) It is true that another writer notes that Luther "emphasized the importance of the sermon as a particular form of the Word of God" and quotes him as asserting, "One thing is needful, viz., that Mary should sit at Christ's feet and hear his Word daily. . . . There is one eternal Word; all else must pass away, no matter how much concern it may cost Martha."¹³ He further states quite truly that "the sermon gains effectiveness because it is *in* the service. The liturgy with its varied and harmonious structure supports and strengthens the sermon." Nevertheless, he loses few opportunities to stress the over-arching importance of the sacrament of the altar as "the most exalted . . . way in which the Word comes to us, . . . the purest means of fellowship with the divine. . . ." Still another writer, while granting that the sermon "certainly has its place, a rightful one, and a real and rare purpose," emphasizes that "it is *not* the climax" and points out that "the highest act of adoration, the fullest realization of the Presence, have always been and always will remain centered in the Holy Communion."¹⁴ All of them speak strongly for the weekly "celebration" of the sacrament as well, mourning the "half-mass" commonly found among us today as the normal Sunday worship in our congregations. And with somewhat similar unanimity the thought is expressed in one way or another by today's liturgiologists, our own and others, that when the sermon is exalted all sense of reverence and mystery and order and beauty and historical continuity is threatened, with argument taking the place of adoration. Finally, it is charged that the "bad times" of the church in our history (particularly the period of Rationalism) are to be identified with this same elevating of the pulpit above the altar—apparently forgetting that in the medieval

12 Edward T. Horn, *Altar and Pew* (Philadelphia, 1951), pp. 3, 11, 12.

13 Reed, *op. cit.*, pp. 69, 289, 305, 306.

14 P. Z. Strodach, *A Manual on Worship* (Philadelphia, 1946), pp. 225, xxvi.

church the reverse practice was followed and helped to make the Reformation necessary.

In fine, we cannot but conclude that the total force of the liturgical movements found here and abroad is in the direction of demoting and underplaying the sermon, of "whittling it down to size," of reducing its importance on the one hand and laboring, on the other, for the building up of a service that is to be essentially objective, instinct with the mystical, and aimed at exalting the sacrament of the altar as the climactic "act of worship" with loud overtones of thanksgiving if not of sacrifice. It will be denied, and quite possibly with some justice, that there is any deliberate militancy against the place of the sermon. But whether consciously intended or not, that is surely the thrust that will assert itself. As George Hedley, speaking of the religious life of America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, has noted, "The consequence of the centrality and length of the sermon inevitably was that other parts of the service were sacrificed to it, some by being treated casually and many by being omitted altogether."¹⁵ It is not too much to say that, with the exaltation of the Sacrament of the Altar, the process will be repeated in reverse order and the sermon will inevitably be treated casually or omitted.

Thus far we have recognized as valid the generally acclaimed and prime importance of public worship to the life and people of the church. The propriety of a vital place for the sermon in the service of worship has been asserted. The generally low estate of preaching and the disparagement of and declining interest in the sermon has been noted, attributing it in part to the times and in part to the failure of the ministry to make the sermon all that it might and should be. Nevertheless, we have found that the greatest single force militating against the place of the sermon is in the work and influence of the liturgical movement in its varied expressions and aspects. The issue, whereby the pulpit and the altar, preaching and the sacrament, are placed over against each other rather than side by side, has been joined by the liturgiologists, the representatives of the liturgical movement, and their adherents. The present situation seems almost less the result of a drift than of a drive.

Let us now approach the problem by another route. Let us ask

15 *Op. cit.*, p. 170.

ourselves what the criteria are by which the elements of the service of public worship are to be judged or determined. They seem to me to be four: the historical, the theological, the aesthetic, and the edificatory. The historical would seem to be the one with which to begin.

It is but natural that we should look back. All that we have and are is related to the past, to our long background. What we have learned has largely come from or rests upon it. We do not do well to try to sever ourselves from the wholesome example and experience of the past. But the weakness of the historical lies in the fact that almost anything can be supported to a degree by a reference to history. It is the weakness of Luther, in a sense, that he spoke and wrote so voluminously that almost anything can be proved by reference to his works. History, too, has covered such a span of circumstances and customs and space that by itself it is not necessarily authoritative. Moreover, the historical is relative. Among us, a building two hundred years old is old. In Europe, a building two hundred years old is a commonplace. Is it enough for us to say that some four hundred years have witnessed a consistent use or particular outlook? We do this in some matters, but in others we say that we must go back to New Testament times although, again, we are unwilling to allow those times to provide the norm in all things. It seems quite generally to be a matter of where you choose to stop—and stopping where you find what you most want for the sake of the argument in hand. Does the custom of administering Communion every Lord's Day in the primitive church necessarily mean that we must do the same—or should the fact that in times past Communion was in some instances and areas administered to children who were hardly more than infants control us in our practice? Does the fact that in the course of the years some have interpreted “as oft as ye drink it” to enjoin frequency, rather than simply to mean “whenever,” say that it is rightly so interpreted or that we must so interpret it? Does the fact that occasionally the phrase “the ministry of the Word *and* sacraments” has been thought to carry with it a sense of quantitative equality, rather than to indicate a correlative relationship, mean that we must think likewise? It appears obvious that historicity as such is an uncertain criterion and needs to be checked by others.

Of these others, certainly for us the theological criterion assumes importance of a major sort. As Wilhelm Loehe has put it, “It is

better to give up everything else and to hold only the pure doctrine than to go about in the pomp and glory of splendid services which are without light and life because the doctrine has become impure."¹⁶ When we consider the primacy or centrality claimed for the sacrament of the altar and the related question of the frequency of its administration, a number of theological questions arise. Is the sacrament something different than the Word of God, the Gospel? Has the sacrament something different to offer, does it add something to the Word? Can it offer anything more than the Gospel offers? Is it true, as Hedley states, that "we shall meet the Lord the more readily, and the more really, as we gather about his table, than ever we shall in speaking or hearing words from the pulpit?"¹⁷ Or is the Apology correct when it says, ". . . the effect of both is the same" (Apology XIII, 5)? Is it really permissible to say that the service is a torso without the sacrament, that preaching is secondary to the sacrament, that Christ is present only in the sacrament? Or shall we rather say with J. T. Mueller, "In spite of its high purpose the Lord's Supper should not be overemphasized in a Romanizing manner as if divine grace were offered us merely or chiefly through the sacraments. The Apology is indeed Scriptural when it writes, 'Of all acts of worship, that is the greatest, most holy, most necessary, and highest; to preach the Word?' "¹⁸ Should we make a sharp distinction between a service where the Word is ministered and a service where the sacrament is administered? Is it not the more correct to say that the Word is primary to the sacrament, that the Word, whether connected with the sacrament or not, is the chief means of grace? That it is the Word which makes a sacrament of the element, that the sacrament has no value other than the Word bestows, and that the declaring of the Gospel is an essential preliminary to the sacrament and affords the only context in which it can be properly understood or truly appropriated? Is Stählin wrong in saying, "Steward, minister, distributor of the mysteries of God—such is the preacher in the pulpit no less than the liturgist at the altar?"¹⁹

When it is urged upon us that the Lord's Supper be administered

16 W. Loche, *Three Books Concerning the Church* (Philadelphia, 1908), pp. 198, 199.

17 *Op. cit.*, p. 202.

18 J. T. Mueller, "The Means of Grace," in *What Lutherans are Thinking* (Columbus, 1947), ed. E. C. Fendt, p. 285.

19 W. Stählin, in *The Lutheran Church Quarterly*, Oct., 1948, p. 344.

with much more frequency than is current among us, preferably every Lord's Day, are there not many things we dare not overlook? Will it not tend grossly to over-emphasize the priestly character of the ministry at the expense of the prophetic? Can we consistently present the thought that reception of the Lord's Supper is a most estimable privilege and a means of most intimate communion with the living Lord without at once urging that all should always partake of it whenever the privilege is offered, exactly as we now urge upon them the hearing of the Word and sharing in public worship Sunday after Sunday? Will not the very frequency tend to lower the high esteem in which we properly hold the sacrament and tend to reduce the preparation that is made for it or make it appear to be the sole means of grace? Can the tendency be avoided that the Communion will increasingly seem to be an act of man as such, a sacrificial act of worship, working righteousness by its very performance? Will not its "objectivity" be unduly increased and its "magic" aspect be enlarged? Will it ever come to be understood that there is more than a grain of truth in what a modern Anglican, the late Professor F. C. Burkitt, said to clergy urging frequent Communion: "I do not think that the clergy always realizes that a kind of belief in the value of Holy Communion . . . is sometimes dumbly testified by staying away more than by perfunctory attendance?"²⁰ The Reformation rightly interpreted the Sacrament of the Altar sacramentally. This we must be sure to continue to do. And it seems a fair question whether emphasizing the centrality and frequency of Holy Communion, necessarily demoting the preached Word in the process, will accomplish this.

There is certainly no good reason why our worship should not be aesthetically satisfying. But it is exceedingly difficult to draw a line in this area. The dangers are great when once we begin to think in terms of the beauty of our service. When the aesthetic is built up for its own sake, endless prettifying is the result, with music and millinery and finger paints and pectoral crosses all being pressed into service, as one recent writer has somewhat flippantly phrased it. Even where this is not the case, but there is an honest appreciation of form and orderliness, there is great danger that it will not be remembered that form as such remains form and does not necessarily develop wor-

ship or bring the Spirit with it. Objective beauty has much to be said for it, but it must also be noted that the aesthetic can easily become anaesthetic, lull people into quiescence, and cause them to forget that our call is to witness Christ wherever we are set in life and not merely to contemplate beauty from where we sit in church. It is noteworthy that in the Greek Orthodox Church, where the aesthetic character of the ritual has been most highly developed, the Zoë Brotherhood, which aims to bring new life to the church in Greece, has chosen as its first emphasis and instrument the cultivation of preaching and the upgrading of the proclaimed Word. J. B. Phillips, in his preface to *The Young Church in Action*, describing the church in its first youth, admits that its members were "uncomplicated and naive," but points out that "these men did not make 'acts of faith,' they believed; they did not 'say their prayers,' they really prayed." He further remarks, "When we compare the strength of the Spirit-filled early church with the confused and sometimes feeble performance of the church today, we might perhaps conclude that when man's rigidity attempts to canalize the free and flexible flow of the Spirit, he is left to his own devices."²¹ There is such a thing as "stifling churchliness"—and it comes most easily where the aesthetic is sought over much. Do the liturgiologists of our day fully realize how soon a worthy liturgical opus can become an opiate if surrounded by the objectively beautiful and the mystically lovely?

The word "edificatory" allows of two pronunciations. But it allows of only one meaning. It means "tending to build up." In our context it means tending to build up the church and the spiritual life of its people. It is here maintained that the demoting of the sermon in the interests of the centrality and frequency of the sacrament, which is the almost certain result as we have tried to make clear, cannot but result in turn in the impoverishment of the church and its people. The three non-Lutheran communions that have tended to emphasize the importance of liturgy and of sacramental celebration are the Roman, the Greek Orthodox, and the Episcopalian (Anglican). It is noteworthy that all three have been making strenuous efforts to build up the power of the pulpit and are modifying their former approach and emphasis by a larger recognition of the fact that a church's life is no stronger than

21 J. B. Phillips, *The Young Church in Action* (New York, 1955), pp. vii, ix.

the life it builds up in its people. Were none of the people of the church sinners, preaching could well be dispensed with, apart from efforts to evangelize and win the unchurched. But since all our people, and we as well, are indeed sinners even though "justified," the problem of edification remains with us. If the service is to be a matter of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, with the sermon played down and the sacrament increasingly rendered sacrificial in character, then that is one thing. But if the service is to be, as we deem it should be, both sacrificial and sacramental in character, then the preached Word must be given free course and the liturgical movement in the direction of the centrality and frequency of the sacrament held in restraint.

The criteria that speak most loudly and should be counted most important are the theological and the edificatory. To the liturgiologists, though we desire to be fair to them, the historical and the aesthetic seem to be the major criteria. This is not to charge them with being blind to the importance of the others but simply to say that they seem to discount them to an unwarranted degree. It is a little unfortunate, too, that by the very extremes to which they go they make it virtually necessary to go to the opposite extreme in order to preserve a balance. Were the manufacturers of automobiles not so insistent upon stepping up the power of the motors they put in their cars, there would be little or no talk of equipping them with governors. But it is when men like the Methodist liturgiologist George Hedley let themselves speak as he does that one is inspired to retort. Thus, to quote him, "Too many churches have fifty-two (or 104) sermons a year, and only four Communion services. Perhaps fifty-two Communions and four sermons would do more to ensure the real presence of the Lord in our midst and in our hearts. We need not settle, however, for either-or. It is rather imperative that we have both-and. And it is critically important that we shall recover soon from the notion that the primary Christian service is the one we can ordinarily get along without."²² Balance is indeed what we want and need. But balance is not attained by indiscriminately piling more and more on the "high" side until things tip over altogether and a worse imbalance is effected. I am reminded of a ship sailing up from Venezuela quite a few years ago carrying liquid asphalt in her hold. Some battens gave way and the asphalt shifted, causing a grave list. The vessel pulled into a southern United States

²² *Op. cit.*, p. 202.

port. Then came the matter of securing balance. It could not be done by piling any number of sandbags of any old weight on the high side of the vessel. To do that would be to risk sudden capsizes. It became necessary to work the problem out with the greatest skill and care, anticipating the effects of what was being undertaken until exactly enough counterweight was added to insure the righting of the ship. However, the problem of the balance between the sermon and the sacrament cannot be solved thus quantitatively—any more than a balanced order of ham and eggs is had when we have an equal number of hams and eggs—nor is it anything that can be determined either arbitrarily or with scientific accuracy, establishing the line at this number or that point. The important thing is that the best interests of all interests be served, the interests of the whole church's life and the life of all its people. It is therefore to be felt for, worked toward, and finally achieved locally and at large through cooperating good will and understanding rather than by slashing statements of argument or by sudden and arbitrary decisions.

It has been noted that the sermon is of low estate today. It does not seem that insisting upon the centrality and greatly increased frequency of the sacrament, held in most high esteem though it is by all of us, is the need of the moment. In the large, our Lutheran genius is nearer to that of the Reformed churches than to that of Rome in the matter of sermon and sacrament. Thus it seems that what is needed is that the sermon be strengthened, both for its own sake and that it may guard against the almost certainly unfortunate effects that seem bound to follow an over-stressing of the sacrament of the altar. Some sermons, doubtless very many, should have no place in public worship, and certainly not in the prayer! And there may be services without a sermon as far as that goes. But *the* sermon should not be demoted as an element of normal services. It should be developed. Preaching has been vital in both of the greatest periods of the church's life—in the early church and in the church of the Reformation. To the success of the latter, Adolph Spaeth has reminded us, the preaching of the pure Gospel, powerfully and effectively, was essential. It was not an idle word that Luther spoke when he said, "The devil does not mind the written Word, but he is put to flight wherever it is preached abroad," or again, "You bishops! What answer will you give to Christ? . . . You do not take the least interest in teaching the

people. Woe to you!" It needs to be remembered that every generation must in turn be won to God in Christ. For this the timely and relevant sermon in the language of the day is more necessary than the timeless sacrament of two thousand years ago which, without such preaching, will lose its meaning and be betrayed.

Preaching is, of course, a problem of communication. It is perhaps not so much how we communicate that is at fault as what we communicate. Here is where our preaching needs to be strengthened most mightily. Reference has already been made to the "bald moralism" of much modern preaching (H. T. Lehmann speaks of "inspirational doses of 'moraline' ")²³ and to the "mere improving discourse" that is little more than an urge to sanctification. More than these are needed. P. Carnegie Simpson has well called preaching "the monstrance of the Gospel."²⁴ The thought is a gripping one, and it needs to grip us all. Remembering that for the Roman Church a monstrance is a vessel in which the consecrated host is exposed to receive the veneration of the faithful, it is soon seen how suggestive it is. For what is preaching if it is not the setting forth before the people of the Gospel of the living Lord, of God in Christ, mediating his presence and his power? The one question to be asked at the end of the sermon, says James S. Stewart, is: "Did they or did they not meet God today?" It is not melancholy theology that is demanded but the "good news" that God has come to meet men where they are! It is then that the words of man become the Word of God—and nothing less will do. There is, of course, a sacrificial aspect to preaching in that the minister by his very preaching bears his personal testimony. But the heart of the sermon must be sacramental in character, and where it is, the service is complete whether the sacrament of the altar is administered or not. (The question, as Wilhelm Stählin has suggested, may well be asked whether there is indeed any non-sacramental Word of God?) Such preaching will help the people to understand and to appropriate the Gospel and will inspire them to communicate it in turn. Such preaching will constitute a personal encounter with God in Christ for adoration, commitment, and fellowship and will indeed personalize the

23 H. T. Lehmann, *Heralds of the Gospel* (Philadelphia, 1953), p. 44.

24 P. Carnegie Simpson, *The Fact of the Christian Church* (New York, 1935), p. 71.

liturgy. It will not rule out doctrinal preaching but it will make room for the miracle of which Thomas V. Calkins writes:

The pastor spoke of dogma,
But I sensed behind the law he spoke
A dimly limned and formless, lovely face.
Through spate of words
There beamed a matchless grace
Which turned my chill to warmth.
It bade me make
From loneliness a sense of oneness, born
From endless dawns of eternal morn.
The words he spake were dogma,
But their message . . . Love.

Where is a minister more a priest of God than when he preaches thus? Such preaching is what Daniel Jenkins calls "the realization of the presence in the midst of the living Christ, whose Word is still mighty to the casting down of strongholds and who is still able to bring every thought of his wayward disciples into his captivity."²⁵ The sermon that is truly evangelical, Scriptural, setting forth the saving facts of the Gospel, clear, sound, churchly yet popular—that sermon will always have a place in public worship and even the most valiant exponent of the glow and glory of the historic liturgy must ultimately admit it.

Oliver S. Tomkins, secretary to the Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches, tells us that "three positions in this matter can be distinguished: 1. The sermon is nearly all and the sacrament only an addition, a confirmation of the promise given us in the Word; 2. The sacrament is nearly all and the preaching of the Word only an announcement of the Lord visiting his church in the sacrament, an extra which has no place in worship, though it may be useful in itself; 3. Sermon and sacrament are both of equal value in the relation of God to the church, the sacrament must be explained, the Word must be the announcement of the death of the Lord, until he comes." The phrasing is awkward but the idea is fairly clear. If the phrase "of equal value" may be understood to mean "of equal effect"

25 Daniel Jenkins, *The Strangeness of the Church* (New York, 1955), p. 85.

and is not quantitative, it is the third that we find most to our liking and truest to what we conceive ought to be. In this connection, we find Luther D. Reed's analogy of sermon and sacrament as "twin peaks"²⁷ suggestive, but that does not mean to say that with him we feel that we must climb both every week.

26 *Op. cit.*, p. 53.

27 *Op. cit.*, p. 233.

Roman Catholic Magisterium and the Analogy of Being

BY NIELS C. NIELSEN, JR.

THE analogy of being has come to occupy an increasingly important place in Roman Catholic theology. Thomas Aquinas' discussion of this idea is brief, but it has been of special interest to Thomistic apologists ever since the Reformation. The analogy of being defines the natural relationship between God and man which is presupposed in both Roman Catholic doctrine and Roman Catholic practice. It does not signify complete identity, but only likeness in difference. Fundamentally, it makes possible a knowledge of God apart from faith. The analogy of being is not only basic to the predication of the divine attributes in Thomistic natural theology but is also the first premise of all Catholic metaphysics of theism and of all Catholic sacramental practice. In effect it makes clear that there is a common basis in being, in spite of all differences, between God and man.

Karl Barth's rejection of the analogy of being is fundamental to his criticism of Roman Catholicism. Barth argues that the lines of difference between Roman Catholics and Protestants have changed significantly since the Reformation. He believes that his position expresses the intent of the Reformers against the pronouncements of the Council of Trent and the Vatican Council. In particular, he holds that Luther and Calvin today would reject the analogy of being in its totality. Barth's own position is expressed emphatically in the preface of the first volume of *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik*: "I regard the *analogia entis* as the invention of the Antichrist and think that because of it one cannot become Catholic. Whereupon I at the same time allow myself to regard all other possible reasons for not becoming Catholic as shortsighted and lacking in seriousness."¹

An evaluation of the relation between the analogy of being and natural theology is beyond the scope of this paper. Our exposition is limited to consideration of the relation of Barth's position to the Ro-

1 I/1, VIII-IX.

man Catholic doctrine of *magisterium* following the modernist crisis. Is the Roman Catholic position summarized in principle in the analogy of being? Not all Roman Catholic scholars agree with Barth's appraisal. L. Bouyer in *Du Protestantisme à L'Eglise* criticizes Barth for identifying Roman Catholic theology too exclusively with Thomism.² Charles Journet, on the other hand, in *Primauté de Pierre* concludes that the analogy of being defines Roman Catholic-Protestant differences incisively.³ It is important to note that Barth does not completely abandon the idea of analogy in his refutation of the Roman Catholic position. Rather, he formulates a positive doctrine, the analogy of faith, which he makes the principle of Protestant interpretation.

Barth's appraisal of the idea of analogy grew out of his many exchanges with the German Jesuit, Erich Przywara. In one of the later prefaces to his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, Barth described Przywara as one of the very few persons who really understood his position initially.⁴ Moreover, it was Przywara who forced Barth to make a clear break with the analogy of being. Przywara's own interpretation of this doctrine is many-sided and eclectic. He does not limit it to the predication of God's attributes, but makes it the inclusive principle of Roman Catholic synthesis.⁵ Przywara's exposition was strongly influenced by the existentialism of Heidegger as well as by Augustinianism. His free interpretation of Thomism as only one constituent part of the Roman Catholic tradition is probably responsible for his current disfavor with Catholic leadership in Germany today. However, in the period between the two world wars, Przywara was the leading Jesuit apologist in Germany, comparable only with Guardini as a Roman Catholic philosopher of religion.

Influenced by the ideas of Husserl, Przywara sought to formulate an inclusive phenomenology of Roman Catholic piety, philosophy, and theology.⁶ In particular, he made the analogy of being the essential

2 (Paris, 1954), 171. Barth's position is criticized from the Protestant point of view in Emil Brunner, *Revelation and Reason* (London, 1947), 77-80. Brunner argues that Barth has appropriated an old idea, the analogy of faith, and given it a fundamentally new content.

3 (Paris, 1953) 48.

4 Cf. preface to the fourth edition.

5 Przywara, *Analogia Entis* (Munich, 1932).

6 Przywara, *Religionsphilosophie katholischer Theologie* (Munich, Oldenbourg, 1927). Translated as *Polarity* by A. C. Bouquet (London, 1935).

principle of his position. Przywara believed that this doctrine has appeared in at least six different forms in Roman Catholic interpretation, namely, early Patristic, Augustinian, Thomist, Scotist, Molinist, and that characteristic of the ideas of Newman. These six varieties of Roman Catholic expression reduce in turn, according to Przywara, to two major types, namely, the Augustinian and the Thomistic. Przywara interprets the analogy of being as an inclusive reference which joins immanence and transcendence in balanced intellectual synthesis. Ultimately, its truth derives from the authoritative pronouncements of the church's teaching office rather than any philosophical doctrine.⁷ Concept and mystery are joined together in the Church's living *magisterium*. Przywara charges that Protestant theology, lacking such authority, perennially vacillates between an overbearing emphasis on immanence in liberalism and an extreme doctrine of transcendence in Reformation theology.

Przywara defended the analogy of being on philosophical as well as theological grounds. He insists that the Roman Catholic synthesis of Greek philosophical wisdom with Christian revelation is valid in principle. Philosophical inquiry, although not prerequisite to faith, none the less aids in the understanding of religious truth. Przywara argues at length for the validity of the traditional Greek distinction between being and becoming; the inability to apprehend truth in its fullness is a distinguishing mark of human finitude. Przywara holds that there is valid intellectual knowledge of God apart from faith which is clarified and supported by authority. This was, in fact, the Catholic position for many centuries before Aquinas. Przywara claims that the Catholic doctrine of immanence and transcendence had its definitive formulation in the decree of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.

It is clear that Przywara's fundamentally Augustinian position relates more directly to Barth's view than that of most Roman Catholic apologists. As against the doctrine of the analogy of faith, Przywara insists that Roman Catholicism encompasses both epistemology and metaphysics; indeed, both have a basic unity of principle in the analogy of being. Przywara holds initially that the Roman Catholic philosopher must know the philosophical tradition in detail as well as share its spirit in a genuinely creative manner. On the other hand, he must submit

7 "Die Reichweite der Analogie als katholischer Grundform," *Scholastik*, XV, 339-367, 528-532.

without reservation to the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, attempting to understand its doctrines without question. Ultimately, the union of immanence and transcendence is in the church itself, which shares in and yet transcends time and history. The final significance of the analogy of being is not in a metaphysical doctrine but in the visible church. In short, the analogy of being is implied by the church's *magisterium*; the hierarchy itself exemplifies this principle as it speaks for God as visible, immanent teacher.

Both Przywara and Barth hold that the church's *magisterium*, interpreted from the analogy of being, is definitive of the differences between their respective churches. For the Roman view, the church is an extension of the Incarnation and continues Christ's teaching office. Jesus' commission to Peter empowers the latter's successors implicitly to speak infallibly *ex cathedra*. In terms of ecclesiology, the analogy of being signifies that grace enters deeply and abidingly into history. God is not "over against" the church, as Barth and most Protestants have taught. Rather, the Roman doctrines of *ex opere operato*, sacramental grace, and synergism follow from the analogy of being. In short, this doctrine makes clear that the church's *magisterium* is substantially and immediately present with infallible authority as well as divine power in history. The human and the divine are joined in its ministry, and in particular its teaching office.

The analogy of being also validates the Roman Catholic doctrine of tradition. It makes clear that the church's *magisterium* transcends Scripture, ultimately determining its meaning. Przywara regards the pastoral office of the church as a singular blessing in its guidance of all faithful Roman Catholics, and it is not surprising that the Protestant, Karl Heim, accused him of being an apostle of priestcraft.⁸ The analogy of being is also definitive for Christian philosophy. Bouyer and Przywara both emphasize that the church's *magisterium* strengthens Roman Catholic intellectualism in guiding and directing the philosophical consciousness.⁹ In principle, this doctrine makes possible a synthesis of natural and revealed truth. It is, in effect, a rejection of Barth's "occasionalism," his emphasis on event, as well as Protestant nominalism.¹⁰

8 Karl Heim, *God Transcendent* (London, 1935), 10.

9 Bouyer, *op. cit.*, ix.

10 Jérôme Hamer, O.P., *Karl Barth: L'Occasionalisme Théologique de Karl Barth* (Paris, 1949).

Przywara emphasizes that a doctrine of creation is as necessary to Christian truth as the claims of special revelation and redemption. Indeed, Roman Catholic theology presupposes a correlation between nature and grace. The analogy of being makes explicit the unity of the natural and supernatural orders. It is, in fact, an explicit rejection of the Protestant emphasis on faith alone, which, on Przywara's view, directs attention too exclusively to special revelation. Przywara makes Augustine fundamental to his defense of this position. He argues that the analogy of being is presupposed in Augustine's theology, although the full Roman Catholic distinction between nature and supernature appears only later in the formulation of Aquinas. The Thomistic deduction of God's attributes, Aristotelian natural theology, and the Thomistic proofs for God's existence are secondary to Augustinian intellectualism. Przywara holds, in particular, that Augustine's later works must be evaluated with his earlier, more philosophical writings.¹¹

Barth's reply to Przywara is not philosophical, although he is assuredly influenced by Kant and Heidegger as well as Kierkegaard. Barth simply seeks to be faithful in principle to the truth of the Reformation: he insists that we may be sure of authentic knowledge of God only in Jesus Christ; the *sola fide* requires the rejection of the analogy of being. Barth's own doctrine of the analogy of faith is not worked out in detail in any part of his theology. He allows an analogical correspondence between the Word of God and the word of man in the Incarnation.¹² Yet he wishes to avoid any intellectualism which deifies living faith. Ultimately, his reference is the work of the Holy Spirit, which alone is the final determiner.

Barth argues that the analogy of faith is implicit in the theologies of Augustine, Anselm, Bernard of Clairvaux, Luther, and Calvin. The living Word of God, encountered in faith in a historical situation, gives direct and certain knowledge. In itself, it is a refutation of static dogmatism. Protestantism cannot be bound to a literalism concerning Scripture because grace establishes its own dynamic context. Neither is Roman Catholicism justified in introducing an extraneous concept of nature based on alleged knowledge from a fallen world of nature. Rather, the free Word of God must be understood from his own sovereign rule and mercy. In particular, we are not justified in pre-

11 Przywara, *Augustinus, Die Gestalt als Gefüge* (Leipzig, 1934).

12 Cf. Edouard Burnier, *Bible et Théologie* (Lausanne, 1943).

supposing a general analogy structure of being as in Roman Catholic theology. The truth of revelation can be analyzed only *post factum*. Indeed, it can be known specifically only from God's action in history and must be judged Christocentrically from the event of the Incarnation.

Barth's theology parallels contemporary Roman Catholic interpretation of *magisterium* in its emphasis on the dynamic character of Christian truth, even though it is drastically opposed to the Roman Catholic doctrine of authority. The Roman Catholic concept of living tradition was discussed comprehensively by the Jesuit, Walter J. Burghardt, at the 1951 meeting of the Catholic Theological Society of America. Burghardt, in his paper entitled, "The Catholic Concept of Tradition in the Light of Modern Theological Thought," argues that the Roman Catholic Church's doctrine of *magisterium* is basic in distinguishing its teachings from that of all other Christian bodies.¹³ He comments on the charge of the ex-Roman Catholic, Barrois, that *Humani generis* represents an abandonment of the concept of unwritten tradition as formulated at the Council of Trent. Burghardt, of course, insists on continuity as against Barrois' Protestant view but none the less allows for a growing theological understanding of the idea of tradition in the Roman Catholic Church.

Burghardt argues that the Roman Catholic position can be understood only from its later development. From the Council of Trent to the end of the seventeenth century he finds an emphasis on tradition as a source on which the church may draw in its teaching office. In this period, most Roman Catholic theologians presuppose an implicit distinction between tradition and *magisterium*. The Roman Catholic position was in part negative, acknowledging as against Protestantism that tradition as well as Scripture is a valid source of knowledge. The decrees of the Council of Trent state specifically that traditions apart from Scripture are a valid source of knowledge. Barrois and Cadoux, both Protestants, have regarded this as the myth of unwritten tradition.¹⁴ From the Roman Catholic point of view, it is important to note that the Council of Trent offered no final systematic definition of tradition. Rather, it affirmed the basic principle of the contemporary Roman Catholic position, namely, that unwritten traditions have been

13 *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Convention*, 42-77.

14 C. J. Cadoux, *Catholicism and Christianity* (London, 1928), 297.

preserved validly in the church and are communicated through it as a channel.

Michel, in studying this period, cites as representative the treatise of Melchior Cano, published in 1563.¹⁵ Cano designates two special sources, Scripture and apostolic traditions. In addition, he holds that the infallibility of Christian truth is guaranteed by the belief of the collective church, the doctrinal activity of the councils, and the decisions of the popes. Two other factors contribute to the transmission of the deposit of faith on this view, namely, the Fathers and the Scholastic theologians and canonists. The basic referent in understanding this point of view is the formula of Vincent of Lerins: "That is certainly to be believed which has been believed in all places, always, and by all." Schaff has given an excellent summary of the Protestant reply to the Roman Catholic claim of universality, arguing that the Roman Catholic Church's teaching in the past has reflected a wide diversity of opinion.¹⁶ Barth is assuredly correct in holding that the Roman Catholic position has changed in form if not in principle since the Council of Trent. Consequently, the Protestant counter-statement must be clarified by reformulation.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Roman Catholic thought shows increased emphasis on tradition as a living rule of faith. Theologians of various backgrounds insist that tradition itself is a dynamic, living thing. Burghardt holds that this view, which has explicit statement in the works of Möhler, has its earlier beginning in the thought of Mayr, Gotti, Billuart, and Kilber. Möhler interprets tradition in terms of dynamic, organic growth, insisting that the church's *magisterium* is continually active in leading the faithful. Burghardt comments:

Into his conception of living tradition Möhler fused three essential elements: the mystical, the organic, and the active. The mystical element he affirmed against the pressure of individualism and rationalism, for the mystical element of tradition is the permanent action of Christ and his Spirit in the collective life of the church: tradition is a collective life of Unity in Love. The organic element he asserted against the sterility of a theological method frozen in abstraction, for the organic element is the continuity and progress of this collective life and faith, together with the identity of the church's consciousness through every moment of its development. The active element he opposed to a nascent historicism and to the Protestant return to the pure Gos-

15 A. Michel, "Tradition," in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, XV, 1 (Paris, 1946), col. 1322.

16 Davis S. Schaff, *Our Fathers Faith and Ours* (New York, 1928), 152.

pel by a seductive, impossible recovery of primitive Christianity; for the active element of tradition is the commitment of the whole church and especially the indispensable role of the *magisterium* as the authorized, permanent representative of Christ.¹⁷

Möhlér distinguishes "tradition in the objective sense in the universal faith of the church through all centuries, embodied in outward historical testimonies. In this sense tradition is usually termed . . . the rule of faith."¹⁸ Such a deposit of faith admits no change, "for one doctrine of faith has subsisted and must subsist through the whole history of the church."¹⁹ Yet tradition in the subjective sense is the church's consciousness of this faith. It is "the peculiar Christian sense existing in the church and transmitted by the pedagogy of the church. . . . Tradition is the Word of God living perpetually in the hearts of the faithful." In short, although the deposit of faith committed to her in revelation remains unchanged, the consciousness of the church grows and develops as its essential truths become more and more clearly present to it. Assuredly, Möhlér's position implies the analogy of being and must be distinguished drastically from the later modernism. He argues that the history of development of Christian thought shows the need of a visible, living authority which protects progress against deviation. The authoritative church exercises its *magisterium* in the tradition, thus giving growth a meaningful course of development. Such an interpretation is, of course, the antithesis of Barth's analogy of faith and the doctrine that all Christian theology stands under the judgment of God. It conforms to Przywara's view that the church, as a dynamic unity of immanence and transcendence, itself embodies the analogy of being. It is as well, however, a refutation in principle of modernism.

It is only fair to emphasize that the conclusions of the Vatican Council do not stand alone but represent the dogmatic affirmation of earlier development. A systematic exposition of the Roman Catholic position before the Vatican Council is found in the writings of Cardinal Franzelin.²⁰ Franzelin does not interpret tradition primarily in terms of truths transmitted, but rather concerns himself with the mode and organ of their transmission. His description makes clear the basic shift

17 Burghardt, *loc. cit.*, 56.

18 Möhlér, *Symbolik*, n. 39 (9th ed.), pp. 357, 358.

19 *Ibid.*, n. 42 (9th ed.), pp. 357, 358.

20 Michel, *loc. cit.*, col. 1336-1339.

of intent since the Council of Trent. Roman Catholic apologists do not seek to show primarily that there are revealed truths, preserved in the church, which are absent or at least not fully intelligible from Scripture. Franzelin argues only that Christ instituted another means besides Scripture for the preservation and propagation of revealed doctrine and that this means gives equal assurance. The latter truth in effect proves the former. Franzelin insists that there is "an authentic, living, perpetual, divinely guided *magisterium* in whose hands even the Scriptures are an instrument."²¹

The full implications of Barth's position are made clear from a consideration of the influence of the modernist controversy on the Roman Catholic theology of the church's *magisterium*. Burghart shows conclusively that Roman Catholic interpretation clearly has proceeded a step beyond the conclusions of the Vatican Council as a result of the modernist crisis. Tradition is now identified with the church's preaching *magisterium*. Before the modernist crisis many Roman Catholic theologians regarded tradition and Scripture as remote rules of faith; *magisterium* was understood as the proximate rule of faith. Cardinal Billot, in the modernist crisis, insisted that this definition was not satisfactory. In Przywara's terms, he insisted that a present, infallible analogy of being is the only authentic Roman Catholic principle. Billot held that tradition in the true Catholic sense is "nothing else than the continued preaching from age to age, by the successors of the apostles with the charism of indefectibility, of that revelation which was originally received from the mouth of Christ or from the lips of the apostles at the dictation of the Holy Spirit."²²

Deneffe's *Der Traditionsbegriff: Studie zur Theologie* is an excellent summary of the idea of tradition in its later development.²³ Deneffe began his research in order to refute Dieckmann's claim that tradition and *magisterium* are identical; in the end, he accepted the conclusions of his opponent. Deneffe holds that the preaching of the church may be regarded in two different ways. As past, it represents the transmission through the centuries of the doctrines received from Christ and the apostles. As contemporary reality, however, it is to be understood

21 Burghardt, *loc. cit.*, 60.

22 Ludovisuc Billot, *De immutabilitate traditionis contra modernam haeresim evolutionismi*, 4th ed. (Rome, 1929), 20.

23 (Münster, 1931.)

as the authoritative *magisterium* clearly proposing what must be believed in accord with the revelation committed to its charge.

Burghardt, in summary, distinguishes the constitutive elements of tradition as follows: The doctrine preached is always the same, namely, a truth or the totality of truth originally communicated to the apostles by Christ or the Holy Spirit. The preacher who proclaims the truth is "primarily, directly, and officially the teaching church"; the *magisterium* is thus regarded as a body of men, namely, the apostles and their successors through the ages.²⁴ Finally, the act of preaching is the actual exercise of the teaching function of the church, the *magisterium qua magisterium*. Burghardt summarizes the contemporary Roman Catholic view as follows:

A final conclusion is significant for theological method. Partially at least for polemical purposes we have divided our theological "proofs" into categories: *magisterium*, Scripture, Fathers, theologians. The relevant remark here is that these are not adequately distinguished categories. Actually, the sole legitimate theological method is the argument from tradition, from the preaching of the church. The argument from the *magisterium* is an argument directly from the church's preaching, directly therefore from tradition. The argument from the Fathers and theologians is the same argument, but indirectly, virtually. The church does not derive her doctrine from the Fathers and theologians; the Fathers and theologians derive their doctrine from the preaching of the church, from tradition. . . . Scripture is the church's book; it is the church's task to tell us what, e.g., Matt. 16:16 means. And her interpretation is not merely as good as her reasons. Her interpretation is her intelligence of the revelation of Christ; and that intelligence is always within her. An argument from Scripture is theologically an argument from the church's understanding of her own book; and this is an argument from tradition.²⁵

If this view is summarized expressly in Przywara's formulation of the analogy of being, Barth's criticism is clear: Questions of philosophical and ecclesiastical practice are secondary in the differences between Roman Catholics and Protestants. The place of authority in Christian faith is at issue. Roman Catholicism regards the church as infallible, and in its hierarchy as possessing the only valid means of grace. Barth affirms with the Reformers that the church itself is under the judgment of God and must be forgiven and redeemed. The Roman Catholic analogy of being is an explicit denial of this latter tenet as much as the Protestant analogy of faith is its affirmation.

Barth's emphasis on God's transcendence is directed against the doctrine of ecclesiastical immanence which is definitive for Roman

24 Burghardt, *loc. cit.*, 65.

25 *Ibid.*, 69.

Catholic theology as well as against the immanentism of liberal natural theology. Przywara, indeed, argues that the balance and integrity of the Roman Catholic synthesis derives from the analogy of being which is made effective in the teaching of the visible church. The Protestant reply must affirm the freedom of the Christian man. That freedom may lead to philosophical unbalance as well as the destruction of established ecclesiastical structures is no more regrettable now than at the time of the Reformation. If, as Barth alleges, the analogy of being allows of a choice only between an artificial intellectualism and the Word of God, there can be no doubt about the Protestant position. Barth, to be sure, recognizes that Roman Catholic "balance" has its corollary in a view of man and history which does not take human sinfulness with as great seriousness as Reformation teaching.

In the end, the analogy of being is most contrary to the Protestant consciousness when it is joined to the claim for infallible authority. It thus becomes the basis for delimiting and controlling grace in a sacramental system. Indeed, history itself is dispensed with in Burghardt's interpretation of *magisterium*. Facts and events are both determined by ecclesiastical decree. This is made clear, for example, in Burghardt's comment on the recently defined doctrine of the Assumption. Admitting that there is no trustworthy historical tradition for this doctrine in the first eight centuries, he writes as follows:

A valid argument for a dogmatic tradition, for the church's teaching in the past, can be constructed from her teaching in the present. And this is actually the approach theology took to the definability of the Assumption before November 1, 1950. It began with a fact: the current consensus, in the church teaching and in the church taught, that the corporeal Assumption was revealed by God. If that is true, if that is the teaching of the *magisterium* of the moment, if that is the church's tradition, then it was *always* part and parcel of the church's teaching, part and parcel of tradition.²⁶

Such a perspective is the primary target of Barth's attack and explains in part his polemic against the analogy of being as the invention of the Antichrist. Tradition, philosophy, history, and revelation each lose their distinctive and authentic reality if they are made subject to the word of the church in infallible pronouncement. The analogy of faith, on the other hand, does not require a synthesis or even logical deduction, although assuredly it allows faith an authentic rationale of

its own. Yet its primary emphasis is on revelation and event. Barth's Christocentric doctrine of transcendence is a warning against any doctrine of immanence, liberal Protestant or Roman Catholic, which confuses the word of man with the Word of God. He rejects the analogy of being because it allows a synthesis of immanence and transcendence, which on Protestant premises minimizes the existential reality of living faith.

John Staupitz on God's Gracious Love

BY JOHN JOSEPH STOUTT

THE TRACT here offered to modern readers in fresh translation has both historical and intrinsic worth far beyond its slender size. It was written during the vibrant, fresh years of the Reformation by Martin Luther's friend, teacher, and confessor, Johann von Staupitz, vicar-general of the Augustinian Order, first dean of the Wittenberg theological faculty, the man of whom Luther said, "If it had not been for Dr. Staupitz I would have sunk in hell," and "I have received everything from Staupitz." Although later Staupitz could not follow Luther on all points, yet as late as 1531, several years after Staupitz' death, Luther acknowledged that Staupitz had originated the evangelical teaching.

Johann von Staupitz was born sometime around 1465, scion of an old noble family which had its roots in the Wittenberg region. He matriculated at Leipzig in 1485, becoming master of arts and then monk. In 1497 he attained the rank of lecturer in theology, and in 1500, it seems, he received his doctorate in theology in Tübingen. He wrote an exposition of the book of Job in sermoniac form, and here he already prized God's merciful love; in this work his Pauline leanings were apparent. In 1500 he left Tübingen to enter a monastery near Munich, where he was elevated to the office of prior in 1503. The Saxon elector, who was founding the university at Wittenberg, sought Staupitz' aid and the latter became attached to the small convent in Wittenberg, where he was busy with practical affairs as well as with the academic matters which his deanship of the theological faculty brought with it. He became vicar-general of the Augustinian Order and spent the next few years in strengthening his order, especially through mild reforms. He was widely acclaimed for his prudence and wisdom.

In the winter of 1507-1508 Martin Luther, who had entered the Augustinian Order, came into almost daily contact with Staupitz. This was a fateful encounter not only for the troubled heart of Martin Luther but also for the history of the Western world. We cannot penetrate into the secrecy of the confessional, and it is therefore difficult to discover what the means of comfort and consolation were

which Staupitz urged upon the stormy young Saxon eagle. Luther had come to the cloister a burdened man, deep in doubt, conscious of overwhelming guilt, and profoundly aware of his own unworthiness. He was in rebellion even then against empty and meaningless acts, and Staupitz, comprehending the depth of spiritual anguish and the sincerity of the searching, restless mind, set young Luther toward theological studies. The friendship between Staupitz and Luther grew as the spiritual intimacy matured through the years, and the Reformer never lost his deep regard for the man whose spiritual ward he had come to be.

Luther, however, met Staupitz not only at confession but also in the university lecture hall, for Staupitz was also professor of biblical studies. And here he learned from Staupitz something of sound evangelicalism, a biblically oriented religion, and he had his mind directed toward fresh interpretations of Scripture. Staupitz also set Luther to the study of Tauler and of the *Theologia Germanica*, thus putting Luther's spirit in contact with the deepest that the medieval church had to offer.

All these impulses germinated in the young Saxon's heart until he could not remain silent, and so he nailed his theses to the door of the Castle Church, hoping that someone would accept the challenge of debate. But he got more attention than he had bargained for, and March 31, 1518, about half a year after he had posted his theses, he wrote to Staupitz: "Good men found fault with me for condemning rosaries, tonsures, chanting psalms, and other prayers. . . . Truly I have followed the theology of Tauler and of that book which you recently gave to Christian Döring to print; I teach that men should trust in nothing but Jesus Christ only. . . ." The book mentioned is none other than the tract here translated, Johann Staupitz' *On God's Gracious Love*. He had written other works, notably *Von der Nachfolgung des willigen Sterbens Christi*, which appeared in Latin in 1515 and in German in 1517, but none of his writings had the effect of the present work, which, although based on an Advent sermon which Staupitz had preached in Munich in 1517, was a summary of views he had long held.

Deep as Staupitz' faith was, and although he understood the faults which had crept into the church, he did not have a reformer's

1 *Luther's Correspondence and Other Contemporary Letters*, translated and edited by Preserved Smith (Philadelphia, 1913), I, p. 78.

temperament. In the foreword to a later tract, *Von dem heiligen rechten christlichen Glauben*, which appeared a year later, he wrote that it was most deplorable that misunderstandings about the nature of the Christian faith had arisen since apostolic times. But Johann von Staupitz was much too cool, too dispassionate, more a seeker for peace than an emboldened champion of truth, to assume the reformer's role. Captivating and gracious of manner, bred and used to the polite society of the courts (such as they were at the time), and not exercised in rough-and-tumble discussions of beer-hall theologians, his was not the spirit to promote vigorous reform.

Moreover, although a sympathetic man by nature, he never really understood the chained tornado in Luther's heart. Staupitz, who was a far simpler man, just did not comprehend the storms and passions, the doubts and fears, that beat therein. In his ministry he urged on Luther patience, resignation, long-suffering, surrender to God's patient providence, tolerance of human foibles, and caution. This advice was, at that time, good for Luther. The young man's holy discontent with corrupt and meaningless church practices needed to ripen. Active reform had to be delayed until Luther's spirit was ready, until he had fully searched his heart—troubled as it was—and found, as Staupitz had taught him, the priority of God's love. So well did Luther learn this lesson that when he came, in 1529, to write his Small Catechism, he repeated the recurring phrase of Staupitz that we must love God above all things.

I. GOD IS LOVELIER THAN ANY THING

Has anyone given thought to how he might show that God is to be loved above all things? This question is answered only when one takes to heart that God is God, that God is not just filled with perfection but is perfection itself, in whom, from whom, and through whom all perfection exists, issues, and derives. He also is love, beyond which nothing lovelier may be experienced. Yes, he is that love which adorns everything upon which it may fall. If it fall upon a bitter enemy, he becomes a warm friend. If it fall upon gruesome darkness, it becomes precious light. If it fall upon a nonentity, it becomes a something—and something good. That which loves God cannot be ugly. Each heart is to believe that outside of God there is nothing unlovely, and that nothing unlovely can issue from him because he is the underived and essential love which is good in itself. Our kind of love takes its goodness from the beloved's character: it is good when it loves

something good, better when it loves something better, best when it loves the highest good. It is evil when it loves what is not good. If, then, it fall upon evil or good, loving nonetheless remains sweet and lovely in itself. Moreover, it makes easy and bearable all which could not be borne without it, or which was entirely unbearable. Now, then, how could the highest, best, unswerving, steady, true, and eternal love—which is God himself—be hard, sour, and unlovely?

II. GOD IS TO BE LOVED ABOVE ALL THINGS

Love God above all things, say Moses and our Lord Jesus, with whole heart, with whole soul, with whole mind, and with all energies and abilities. We owe this to God from our debt of duty and obedience because he is our God to whom we are to return in love whatever we are and can do—heart, soul, mind, abilities, strength, house and goods, fields and meadows, wife and children, brothers and sisters, mother and father, exempting nothing, not even ourselves, both in life and in death, in heaven and in hell. Surely these are hard tasks. Nevertheless, overwhelming love can make them light and sweet. This, then, is what God wants us to do and not to show gratitude from a sad but from a joyful heart. This is why he stirs his love in us before all things.

III. WHEN GOD IS NOT LOVED ABOVE ALL THINGS HE IS NOT GLORIFIED AS GOD

All men are created to the end that they might praise and honor God, winning stature in him, glorifying him in feeling, word, and action. Now, there is no other way by which heart and will may give God his own special highest honor than in that in which his love rests, loving him for nothing else than for his sake alone, with whole heart, soul, and mind, being fully satisfied by his divine perfection, and being emptied of all other loves. But he who selfishly loves God in things puts creatures in the Creator's place, robbing God of his glory and highest honor and making a god out of what is not God. For what the heart loves the most it honors as God, however else the mouth may prate of God. Who knows but that the Christian who says that his wife, children, or possessions are his god may be forever condemned to the fire? But who cannot see that in our daily living temporal possessions, lust, and worldly honor are preferred to God and to his love? This is to be lamented. Today in Christendom we pray just as much to cattle, horses, silver, wood, and to this world's goods as the pagans did a thousand years ago. Ignorant as we are, we still say: Our Father, which art in heaven! True prayer consists not of words, but of love. He who loves, prays. He who does not love, prays not, even though he speak a thousand psalms. He who loves God serves God. He who loves him not serves him not, even though he pile mountain upon mountain. That is why no better thing can happen to man than that he be

drawn, pulled, and led to God's love, especially here in our misery, where demands which we cannot fulfill often hinder our loving and where our inborn weakness, which no one can put off, interferes, along with worldly pride and with the evil enemy's craft, sin, and tyranny.

IV. TO LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS CANNOT BE LEARNED FROM OTHERS

Things which can be known only from experience cannot be learned from others. No one can teach you how to see, hear, smell, taste, test, or experience, much less how to love, rejoice, bewail, and the like. We first try to experience before we love. First we must taste ourselves before God does it within us. This is why David said: Taste and see that the Lord is good. One may indeed tell about colors by seeing and about events by good perception; but no one learns to see from nothing. Similarly, we cannot speak much about God's perfect goodness and about the evidences of his love, however praiseworthy, without experiencing them. Similarly, we may come to speak about the nature of the will, about purity of heart, about a good conscience, and about unfabricated faith. As Paul says, love is the fulfilling of the law—love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and unfabricated faith. But we cannot learn to love God from someone else, much less to love him above all things. For love is a divine act, offered to him whose heart is within God's hand and whose will is in his power, to be turned where and when and how he wills.

V. TO LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS CANNOT BE LEARNED FROM ONESELF

Natural understanding cannot rise from knowledge of creature to knowledge of God and of his eternal power and holiness. Philosophers also say that there is no better thing than God. But as they stick only to contemplation and do not experience God's love within themselves—which must happen if knowledge is to bear or to arouse love—so they do not really know God. That is why Paul says that, although they know God, they do not glorify him as God and are not grateful to him. Therefore their knowledge comes to gross error, especially so because they have no excuse, so that they come to err in their fading thoughts and their hearts grow dark—so dark, in fact, that they give to creatures the honor which belongs only to God above all things, and God therefore lets them fall into sin and shame, whereby they win the wages of their error. Because they had no regard for true knowledge of God he gave them deformed affections and they fall from one sin into another, doing what is not good. It were better, therefore, if man did not know God rather than that he should not glorify the known God as God or that he should not love God above all things.

VI. TO LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS CANNOT BE LEARNED FROM THE
LETTER OF SCRIPTURE

From the Old Testament we learn God's written laws and we find therein wise counsel on how to keep them, what good there is for man in them, and what stigma and shame come from disobeying them. When we compare our duty with our deeds it becomes clear that we have not kept the law, that we are flecked with sin all over. From this we learn that no one can keep the law unless he loves God above all things, and we cannot in any way get this from Scripture's letters. For if love for God above all things grew from legalistic literalism, then no one would have loved God as the Jews, who stuck full of literalism. But law has never brought anybody to perfection—that is, to the love of God above all things, which is man's highest perfection. Moreover, the old law's letters produce nothing beyond knowledge of duty and the consciousness that commands are to be obeyed, the knowledge of the sin of transgressing them, the knowledge of our inability ever to keep them, and the knowledge of the everlasting pain which man therefore must endure. More than this scriptural literalism cannot do. Therefore, as Paul says, it kills. It does not quicken, but it merely discloses the malady. It merely reveals and cannot heal the sin. The only consolation is that the Spirit lies hidden in the letters, that the ancient law is pregnant, bearing the Christ who will give the grace to love God above all things. For those who have found this Spirit and who know the Christ hidden within the law, Scripture has become serviceable doctrine, and, as Paul says, they have found consolation, especially in illness, when seeking strength, in natural death, for quickening through grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, in whom they may love God above all things and perfectly fulfill the law. From this we can see that literalism brings fright—from nature to grace and from self to Spirit—in which we call to God, "Father, Father," becoming anxious for God above all things. For the same reason New Testament literalism is killing to the soul even more than the literalism of the Old, for it points more to God as him who has redeemed us, who for our sakes became man, who suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried; for which we should acknowledge ourselves bound to love him above all things. We justly condemn ourselves as sinners worthy of damnation when, in the face of such inexpressibly great and experienced divine mercy, we remain ungrateful. So, New Testament literalism brings such mortification. And although it brings Christ before one's eyes and his doctrine to one's ears, it cannot bring Christ's Spirit into one's heart. It serves only a heavy death. The Jews had Christ in their eye, ear, and hand; but they did not have Christ's Spirit in their heart! Therefore they deserve more blame than the heathen. They had more blessings from him than anyone else; yet they did not love him as much as he had blessed them. So do we find it even to this day. Those who have Christ most on their tongues do not often find him

in their hearts. It follows from this that they offer him to others as they have him themselves—in tongue, and not in heart, talking much about learning from him, but loving him little. Thereby poor, simple people are prevented from doing what is best.

VII. TO LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS DOES NOT COME TO A PERSON UNLESS
THE HOLY SPIRIT PREVIOUSLY DWELLS IN HIM

Our hearts are interfused, the sainted Paul says, by the Spirit's love, given us by the heavenly Father's Spirit, by Christ's Spirit, and he who has it not is not Christ's and cannot love God above all things. Therefore, the chosen soul's first, highest, and greatest blessing is that God dwells within it. This happens every time that essential, unconditioned love—which is God himself—is in man before his self-love or whatever he may call good. And he conducts himself with pious souls like Mary, the mother of God, who, when she was to conceive God and when the angel informed her that she was to become pregnant and by whom, asked if the order of nature was not to be followed. Then she and all holy souls were given the teaching: The Holy Spirit will come upon you from above and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. This was as if to say that God's child is not born of blood, not from carnal desire nor from human will, but from God's will. In this birth divine vitality overpowers the soul, perfecting all things, all laws, in love. Therefore, we are to ascribe all the good and holy acts which happen to us only to God, who fathers every good fruit within us. As the angel further taught: whatever holy is to be born within you shall be called son of God. O, blessed and more than blessed is he in whom the essential, unconditioned love of God dwells, in whom God himself lives and abides, in whom divine fruit continuously grows, whether he knows it or not—for the Holy Spirit does not boast. Sometimes he gives us an impulse to wrath so that we scold what he wants scolded. He rarely moves us to joy and to improprieties so that we make fools of those whom he wants consoled. And so he often makes his fruit and his children those whom we sought to be his enemies. He begets much, much fruit in us for our salvation of which we have no knowledge. However, were we to see clearly and to know the same image of him within us we would be truly the blessed of the earth. But, as David says, if he is to be loved and pleased he must be concealed within us. He bound heaven beneath him, and man fell, and darkness remained under his feet, and he set the darkness of degeneracy about himself.

VIII. FROM THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT THE LIGHT OF CHRISTIAN
FAITH FIRST ARISES

That no one can attain either sensibility, power, or the love of God above all things from outward knowing of Holy Scriptures is attested to by our Lord Jesus

Christ himself, who said to his dear disciples: I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. If he did not go away, the Holy Spirit would not have come; but if he did go away, he would send him to us. And when he comes he will teach us all things, and the things which Jesus spoke are to be given esoteric meaning. Christ must go from eye to heart, from flesh to spirit, or else he cannot be devotedly known. Therefore, he himself rejects the fruit of his outer teachings, separated and parted from the inner. In this connection Paul says that neither his nor the apostolic teaching lasts where God does not dwell in the heart. Therefore, God assuredly projects himself into that soul in whom he wants to be loved above all things, a light in the darkness wherein his love-worthiness and amiability are seen with firm, undoubting faith, before we have consciously known it. Therefore, knowledge of Christian faith is pure divine grace.

IX. A PERSON WHO HAS NOT BEEN COMFORTED BY GOD'S SPIRIT CANNOT BE HOPEFULLY CONSOLED

All worldly comfort is empty and useless, all trust in creatures deceptive. Therefore Scripture condemns all those who trust in their own or in foreign, fabricated powers, thus seeking creaturely consolation. Real earthly consolation rests and resides, as Paul says, in that we hopefully commend the glory of God's children, that is, that we confidently trust that we are God's children, foreordained to eternal glory. No creature yields such comfort. No one can earn it. It can be bestowed only by the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to whom alone consoling belongs and who only gives us hope, before which there is no merit in man. And, although our hope has no other origin than the merciful divine will—which is essential love or God himself, yet hope is in no way based upon the love we have for God or upon the works we dedicate to him, but it is grounded in God's love for us and on the deeds God works within us. This Paul expressed clearly when he was high in the Spirit he had received from God. For after he had written to the Romans about hope's consolation he immediately added: hope does not disappoint us because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us. This is man's only consolation: that God's inexpressible love has been given him by the Holy Spirit through Christ's merits and not on his own worth. In this does God proffer us his love in that he died for us while we were yet sinners. Now, because he loved us so much as sinners that he reconciled us with the Heavenly Father when we did not want it, how will it then be when we, thus reconciled, do not become blessed, although life issues, not from our own life, but from the one Life, as all deaths issue from one death? From this it follows that our deeds will not bring us the consolation that, through hope, we may yet win out; rather, they yield the comforting suggestion that hope may be within us like fruit which discloses the kind of tree from which it came.

In this sense Peter says that we are to be zealous to confirm our call and election to eternal blessedness by the good works that we do. When the Holy Spirit dwells within a soul, it is as when water flows from a rock: first, water must be in the rock if something is to flow forth from it; secondly, the source must well up if streams are to gush forth. Just as streams lead to the fountain and the fountain to the well's hidden source, so good works—in which faith, hope, and love well up—lead us to the hidden inner water of the Holy Spirit, which is God's firm, essential love. In such a figure of speech, God led the Canaanitish woman to draw water from Jacob's well, to the water which is God himself, which becomes a clear-flowing stream which floods out through faith, hope, and love in every good work. The Holy Spirit is the hidden water, and faith, hope, and love are the fountains which make the well; virtuous deeds are the rivulets. Therefore it is to be concluded that no good work comes from us except the Holy Spirit be in it, as already mentioned. If he be within us, then he is the living water which wells up within us unto eternal life through faith, hope, and love. Now you understand how faith, hope, and love are poured into us in that the Holy Spirit—the living water—pours himself into the heart and moves it to flow forth and to manifest itself. Those who do good works and those who see them know that they are not the sources of the concealed waters; so, works are not the source of faith, hope, and love, but faith, hope, and love take origin from the in-dwelling Holy Spirit.

X. OUR LOVE FOR GOD IS BORN OUT OF THE REVELATION OF GOD'S LOVE FOR US

Nothing can be conceived which produces love better than returned love. Therefore, God is revealed the loveliest when his inexpressible love for us, his great miracle, and Christ's merits are fashioned in the heart, how our heavenly Father, when we were yet his enemies, gave his only Son into flesh, into mortality, into suffering—yes, into death. But such revelation, manifestation, and heart-imagining can be done only by the God who holds our heart in his hand and who bends our will according to his pleasure. Christ, our Lord, is the Rock which yields fire to love, and he gives only when it is driven from him by strong iron. He also is the Rock which yields water, but not before it is struck with Moses' rod. His life, suffering, and death yield no enkindling spark to the soul unless they be stirred by the Holy Spirit with the eternal, unbreachable, constant, firm, divine love, in which he has irrevocably chosen it to be possessor of eternal joy. Otherwise, no knocking avails and no fire is enkindled, even though a real burning ember fall upon the soul which God has ordained to bless, sanctify, and fill with grace. Knock who will, the Rock yields no fire and enkindles nothing. But when God strikes the rock in the chosen one's heart, fire rises, the dead coals live, the black charcoal glows gold-yellow, and the cold brand lights up and burns in love, enkindled by

God's love. Thus love issues from love, our returned love to God from God's love for us. The rock yields no water unless struck by Moses' rod; Christ does not become most lovable, gracious, and grace-yielding unless he be beaten, crowned, mocked, and crucified, so that the merciful God—the true Moses who has given the law of love—is, out of pure love for us, bruised for our sake, so that nothing but love issues from him, flooding our hearts through the Holy Spirit with the unmediated essential love which is God himself, which is given to us unto righteousness before all other graces and gifts, without any merit of ours. Therefrom it finally follows that to love God above all things is a pure grace, beyond all our arts and skills, beyond all our work and merit.

XI. LOVE FOR GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS IS NOT GIVEN TO EVERY LOVER IN THE SAME MEASURE

To love God above all things is to love with blessedness. As there are, even in love of blessedness, a higher and a lower, a more and a less, it is not useless or amiss to consider these differences. We mention—as you have often heard—beginning, advanced, and perfected lovers of God above all things, among whom the first love God less, the second more, and the third the most. Yet they all love God above all things, for, did they love something more or as much as God, their love would surely be God-hate in that they would not ascribe full honor to God, as God's love demands. Straw, hay, wood, gold, silver, and precious stones may build upon rock, but the foundation does not allow itself to be disturbed. Christ must remain Christ, God must be loved above all things as God—this is the foundation of all love and holy desires and is common to all real lovers. But that love distinguishes a more and a less, a higher and lower, arises from the fact that God's precious help does not work in accordance with the highest natural ability, but as the Holy Spirit directs, where and when it will. So, to love God above all things is not only grace, but each degree of love is grace too.

XII. HOW BEGINNERS LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS

It happens that when God's loveliness is conceived so high in the heart that man gains love for God above all things, such love is certainly accompanied by annoyance with all that contradicts God, with original sin, and especially with pride, by which man means to make himself equal or above God. Love brings humility in honor, temperance in appetites, and fear, not like for a lord or master but like young children have for their father. In it there is a mixture of fear and love, a blend of temporal and eternal. Beginners love many things alongside of God. Therefore they do not reach their perfection, even though love for God produces heavenly desires, only because God is loved along with other things, although more than other things. So the beginner falls into many pardonable sins out of

the attraction of temporal well-being, of worldly honor and pleasure. He also falls into quivering fright, fearing temporal shame and discomfort, also having a strong propensity to mortal sin, and he willingly would sin except for the hindrance which the amiable, lovely experience of God in the heart erects as the pure grace of the love of God above all things.

XIII. HOW THE ADVANCED LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS

It further happens that the heavenly God puts himself more amiably into the heart, and enkindles the will, so that now it not only loves him above all things but also uses all other things for God's love, arranging everything to God's praise. He is more concerned about how he pleases God than how his sins disfigure him. He to whom this kind of loving is granted—or, as I say, in whom the Holy Spirit thus loves—follows love's way to righteousness, to strength of mind, to meekness of heart, to prudent dealings, to reasoned decisions, and to whatever comes upon him. I have said that the person who has been so deeply stirred by divine amiability loves in such a way—or rather, the Holy Spirit loves in such a way within him—that he does not ascribe his climbing to himself but ascribes it to God, as Christ said to his disciples, yea, to all of us, that when we stand before kings and judges we are not to consider what we should say but that in that hour it will be given us what to say, for we are not the speakers; rather the Father's Spirit speaks the words of eternal truth in us. Is it, then, not true that he is not speaking whose tongue and lips we see move, whose voice we hear, and whose breath we feel? Why should we not let God own the love which we experience within our hearts? The movement is the Holy Spirit's; the experience is ours. Though one member tickles the other, the laughter is ours! From this it appears that the advanced person's love and its accompanying virtues are pure grace.

XIV. HOW THE PERFECTED LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS

He is called perfect who conceives of God so lovely, sweetly, and amiably that it seems to him that there is nothing friendlier or lovelier than God. Such a person is disgusted with himself, hates his life, longs for death, so that he may not be hindered in loving. So miracles come from him, which God works in him through love. He has joy, peace, and rest. He is annoyed neither by heaven nor hell, angel nor devil, friend nor foe. He hates father and mother, wife and children, brother and sister—yes, he even denies his own soul and fully and completely forsakes himself in this world. He renounces choice and action, and, in full obedience and perfect resignation, he waits only for that which God speaks to and directs within him, living as if he did not live. His spirit clings so closely to God that he is said to be one spirit with God. In him fear has no place, work is

no burden, and suffering is a joy. To whom may we ascribe such wonderful deeds? to man? That is far from a Christian's mind! God is himself the worker and the Holy Spirit is the fire which fully consumes the soul, burning it to ashes, yes wholly and fully negating it, so that only he remains all to all things. May each soul take care that it does not arrogate such deceptions to itself. Rather, let it take joy in the precious and dear God who has drawn it out of itself into him and quickened it to life within him. Then let it consider whether the fruit which grows from such highest love is within it, whether it is the tree which God has planted, for what God does not plant is rooted up, cast out, and burned. Therefore it is the soul's duty to consider two things: first, that it be not without good thoughts, words, and deeds; second, that it acknowledge that it does not work but that the Holy Spirit is working, for there follows, as Paul says, divine sonship, for all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God and cannot sin. As John says, our spirits have witness from the Holy Spirit that we are sons of God, heirs of God, joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ who has given us the witness who acknowledges his deeds not as his own but as of the Holy Spirit which cannot sin. Therefore he adopts his nature and acknowledges himself as a child of grace—no more a child of nature but of grace.

XV. THE STAGES OF LOVE FOR GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS HAVE AN ORDER AMONG THEMSELVES BUT ARE NOT ALWAYS GIVEN BY GOD IN THE SAME DEGREE

According to the natural order we climb from the imperfect to the perfect, and where natural order is maintained that which never was small cannot become great. But where perfection issues from something strange and is a free gift, it depends on the giver and it is as great or as small as he decides. He who voluntarily gives a thousand dollars may give to the first one dollar, to the second ten dollars, or to the third a hundred dollars, and so on. He may even turn it about and give the first a hundred, the second ten, and then one, or he may give the whole thousand all at once, as he wishes and desires. Since the love of God above all things is a free gift of the Holy Spirit, it rests with God to give it in greater or in less degree, as it pleases him, with the exception that the beginner's love is meaner, the advanced person's better, and the perfected person's the best in so far as he has accomplished it. Surely Paul's, Peter's, and Mary Magdalene's penitence was the perfect work in the highest degree of love in that Paul was ecstatically drawn into the third heaven. Peter was flooded with sweet tears, and Mary Magdalene dried God's feet with peace in her heart—the beginning of penitence. Many a person discovers in himself that, in forsaking sin, he may have to forsake himself and the whole world—which is a work of perfected love. So, two or three days thereafter, he grows concerned about some little distraction of mean affairs, or about some foul passion—this is hard work for beginners. At

the beginning we often bear the hundred-weight which belongs to the advanced and do not carry the pound which is too light for beginners. The reason is that we bear it, not with the energy which the All-highest gives us, when and where he wills and as it pleases him, but with ours. From this is seen the folly of men who, according to their mind, seek to move God as they please. These worship themselves, wanting to make a lovely and amiable God, seeking to draw God to themselves by their own piety as we bait the sparrow-hawk with a carcass. These appropriate this image of God's mercy as their own due privilege, taking dirty linen to market and wanting to buy gold with muck. They seek to become blessed by their own righteousness and they use their folly to contradict the sayings of the holy apostles which they have not understood. Nor do they stand well with those who are displeased with their foolishness. O folly above all follies! To err about the number of the stars, the height of the heavens, the depth of the sea, and the like is no shame. But to err in those things which have to do with blessedness is irreparable loss, especially with regard to love, for he who errs about love errs in everything necessary for salvation. But he who does not err therein has nothing of error in that which is needed for salvation. Would to God that all the books in which man learns to do virtuous deeds had been lost and only love survived! Then everybody would do what he ought. But, as virtues issue only from God's revealed love, it often happens that we hinder our own tasting of their sweetness by our ravings and fury. We find them mostly when we are silent, when we listen within, when we open our mouths to await heavenly food, when we do neither good nor evil and await the Holy Spirit's doing. In this way David heard what God spoke within him and comprehended peace; he opened his mouth and God filled him; he was hopefully silent and received spiritual strength. For God's omnipotent Word speaks to the wise man. It does not descend from royal thrones and it does not let itself be heard until all things have grown still. Therefore, peace of heart is to be worked for above all things, and prayer and all inner and outer doings are to be in repose so that we may hear God's secret counsel and experience his lovely stirrings. So you understand that our blessed God enters a thing stealthily. For he cannot be run after, as we read regarding the holy bride who lay abed with no longing for her husband but was disgusted with the advances which he made with tenderness toward her. And then when she pursued him he forsook her.

XVI. THE STAGES OF GOD'S LOVE CHANGE THEMSELVES ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD'S FREE LOVE; HOW MAN IS TO KNOW THE SAME PROFITABLY

Therefore, the love for God above all things is a continuing act which retains its nature as long as the lover maintains the right kind of love, yet not always in the same measure, but more or less, as God sees human need. To Paul carnal

warfare was given so that he would not arrogate himself above the secret revelation. The thief on the cross was made certain of paradise, being given sure understanding that he was a child of blessedness in a sanctified death so that the depth of his sin would not oppress him. St. Paul cried out, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death? This is the voice of the beginner. Later he speaks from the heart: For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate me from the love of God. This is a perfected word of perfected love. So does it happen to this day that, in one hour, yes even within a shorter time, God changes the degrees of love within us. Now we experience perfected elevation of mind and full resignation within us, now a fearful heart and flighty will. And in the same moment many again have comforting resolution and a wholly joyous and happy spirit so they say as David said, I trust God, and I do not fear all my enemies. Consequently, no person on this earth remains constant in one degree of love, but he ascends or descends as the Holy Spirit moves him. Moreover, it is to be understood (and not without special consolation) that the love which God bears for us neither increases nor decreases and often works the very best for us when we least experience or understand it. Many times, too, we are at the sweetest when things are the bitterest for us here on earth, for his divine love produces more for our cross than for our happiness. Heaven is the place, not earth, where God shows himself as joy. Because there is more value in poverty than in wealth, more in suffering than in ease, more in tears than in laughter, more in hunger than in satiety, more in the fellowship of suffering than in the fellowship of consolation, God's love shows itself more when trouble, grief, and suffering come upon us than when we have joy and pleasure. Therefore, although the experience of the quieted heart which belongs to the perfected is sweeter, that of the advanced person's love, which God reveals for the strengthening of spirit, is better and more useful. For this reason God often proffers us the advanced person's love and projects in us knowledge of our shortcomings and fearful doubts about ourselves so that we flee to him like children and so that he shall not puff us up. When this happens out of God's great love, the beginner's love comes to be quite useful, we get as much consolation from God as we bewail ourselves, we do not trust in our own powers, as we undertake not to contend, and we depend only upon the brazen serpent on the pole, as has been prefigured for us in a parable, for when the children of Israel in the wilderness were poisoned and highly discomfited, God gave them a serpent of brass on a pole—a serpent which had no poison because it was made of brass. He who beheld this serpent gained health and all serpents fled him. This signifies that man, infected by devilish poison, can be cured the quickest when he renounces his own struggling and clings only to the cross, trusting only in the struggle that the sinless Christ waged against human sin to drive out the devil's

venom, conquering it and emerging victorious. Depend on Christ alone and you renounce yourself. From this ground we better discover what God commands man. Do not petition for this or that experience of divine love but only for that which pleases him. When this happens man gains steady consolation and we find indifference regarding the love which God fashions for us. But those who do not wish to rest in the highest degree [of love] and do not believe that God abides with them when they do discover love's sweetness, or at least a strengthening of spirit, have no enduring consolation on earth and stand in marked danger both in body and in soul.

XVII. THE ELECT, WHO LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS, DO WHAT IS BEST
FOR ALL THINGS

To the persons who belong to Christ, and who are Christ's, all things and all creatures belong, as Paul says: apostles, the world, life, death, things present, and things to come belong to him who is Christ's. Christ belong to God without mediation; we belong [to God] through Christ. Therefore the elect participate amiably in God through Christ so that all evil and sin are not harmful but work for good. Truly, the real Christian is a wonderful creature of God, whom God from eternity has bound up in such high love before he, as David says, trespasses the divine law, minimizes his judgments, and breaks his commandments. Still, in time God will punish him, and yet not take his mercy from him, so that even his own sins work for his sanctification. For what God once has decreed cannot come to naught; what he once has promised must forever abide; and for those for whom he wishes well even heaven and hell, good and evil, must serve to the best. Thus we are made to err by human works, and we dare not judge and condemn what a person does or what he fails to do, for we discover that God, in greater love, allows some to fall instead of stand. For who can doubt that it was more beneficial to Peter when he fell and denied Christ than it would have been if in stubbornness of heart he had perseveringly stood fast? Our Lord God is more concerned about how he manifests his mercy than in how he manipulates our righteousness. His meanest suffering would have been enough to reconcile us to our heavenly Father, to justify us, to maintain us in righteousness, and to sanctify us. But it would not have been enough to show the immeasurability of his love and the ineffability of his mercy. Therefore Paul says that all have been comprehended under unbelief and sin so that he might show his mercy to all. If sin were removed, who might understand that God's mercy surpasses all his works, that Christ, true Son of God, is the redeemer of the world? How else than through his ineffable mercy might his greatest love come to light? Therefore Gregory condoned sin because from such great mercy so great a Redeemer appeared! Is it a wonder, then, that, as God uses sin to his holy honor, he also uses sin for the

sinner's benefit? We should not think, however, that we may sin unabashedly, but we should energetically seek to flee evil and sin with all our powers, for to cover sin up with mercy is a work which belongs only to God. He alone can make evil good! We ourselves can fall, but we cannot lift ourselves up again. This rests in God's gracious mercy, which surpasses all his works.

XVIII. TO THOSE TO WHOM IT IS NOT GIVEN TO LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS
ALL OTHER THINGS ARE VAIN

Paul says, if I speak with the tongues of men or of angels and have not love, it is like a noisy gong or a tinkling cymbal. And if I had prophetic powers so that I could penetrate with clear knowledge into future mysteries as if they were contemporary, and if I understood all the mysteries concealed in Scripture and had all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountain upon mountain, it is a fact that, had I a deficiency of love, I would be nothing. Further, if I gave all my goods to the poor and flagellated my body even to the flames, but had not love, it would avail nothing. Yes, more! Where no love is, there man, because he is man, falls upon evil days and God's highest gifts bring him more condemnation. Judas would have been better off if he had not been born, as Christ himself said, and had not become an apostle, had not worked miracles, had neither seen nor heard Jesus, and had not eaten sweet food at the same table with him, rather than, having received such grace, he should become the betrayer of Jesus, sell him out, and denounce him to the Jews. From this we are to understand that our dearest Lord God more often gives wrathfully than he lovingly denies. From this also follows that the higher God's gifts are, the more duty they bring, that God is to be loved above all things and that high gifts do not produce love for God. Therefore, when love does not accompany them, they are more poison than gift. Nor do they certify to the love wherewith God has loved us unto sanctification. When they are sundered from love they—above all—make for a puffed up spirit, a prideful mind, false judgments, boastful deeds, imprudent dealings, egocentricity, hypocrisy, disdain for the simple, and other things. Therefore Jesus spoke to his disciples when they took pride in their high divine gifts, and pointedly said that the devil was obedient to this name: I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven, and he gave them the following teaching. "Behold! I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions," he said, "and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." It is a like truth that, like Peter, Judas healed the sick, drove out spirits, and worked other miracles, but as he lacked love, he was finished. So it behooves us to deal fearfully and to be as deep in humility as we are high in gifts from God, for we shall have to give account.

XIX. HE WHO BEARS TRUE LOVE FOR GOD PERFECTS ALL HIS COMMANDS

A true sign of God's love is the perfecting of all his commands according to the wise man's teaching, for love begets its likeness, making one heart, one will, one soul. If it goes above itself, it trains itself to follow the Beloved's will. If it falls below itself it conceives of all things from its own point of view and does not value a thing by its natural worth but by how pleasing it is. Thus it makes evil out of that in nature which God created good. He who loves God above all things is pleased by that which pleases God and is annoyed with everything which displeases God; therefore, he loves righteousness and hates evil. He does good and flees evil—does good, I say, not always in the works of the law but ever in fulfillment of the law, which happens when, in face of the law's works, he fulfills the law. The fulfillment of the law is the love of God above all things, in which that which works evil cannot endure. Therefore the person who truly loves God keeps all that God has commanded of him, all that lies concealed in God's Word, according to the teaching of Augustine, whose words these are: Love God and do what you will. If you are silent, be silent out of love; if you call, call in love. If you punish, punish in love; if you reconcile, reconcile in love. If you retain the root of true divine love in your heart, then good may issue from you, and only blessedness will come from you. Therefore man becomes educated only in the school of God's love; in it only does man become a doer of God's Word; all other arts make hearers only. In this art of love for God parents are to educate their children, masters their apprentices, spiritual shepherds their sheep—especially Christ's flock! Whatever else they learn is nothing but labor and spiritual pain. And no other art is necessary for salvation. Yet it is true that no one but God himself can teach us the art of love, as has been said already. Therefore our Lord Jesus urged us not to seek any other master in the art of salvation but him.

XX. THOSE WHO LOVE GOD IN HIGHEST DEGREE NO LONGER FIND CHRIST'S
YOKE AND BURDEN HEAVY TO BEAR

O God! How many do we see who are made really sensual by the heavy burdens which they have to bear in the misery of world-love and carnal impurity. For a profit the merchant sends ships out into the raging ocean, disturbing his sleep and shortening his life. For glory a person serves at court in constant subservience to everything which injures body and soul. For the sake of sensual love and impure love, which men bear for women and women for men, we carry heavy burdens, for this passion is so deeply rooted in flesh and blood that, without special divine grace, it can hardly be mitigated, much less obliterated. Sexual love came with Eve's rib in paradise, and we suck it from our mothers, yes, even draw it from the maternal heart where it is still hidden in the body. For the sake of

women—as Esdras wrote and as we see before our eyes—we forsake honor, body, goods, virtue, and reason, becoming captives of the insanity of love. Such ingrained love-passion cannot be expunged by cassock and cowl, by cloister or church, by cell or dungeon, except God’s grace comes through our Lord Jesus Christ. But when this comes, it is an easy task, for when it sweetly forms God’s inexpressible love in our hearts, then all other loves must cease, and the clearer it shows and fashions itself, so much the more must flesh and world pass away. It becomes so sweet that all creatures grow distasteful to us; then our iron-ribbed spirit grows soft, the heavy yoke sweet, and the unbearable burden light because God’s Spirit has stirred our spirit with loving-kindness. If you want me to give you an example of this, then listen, at my request, to one that is a thousandfold meaner. Why is it that a magnet follows heavy iron, and as soon as a basin which contains iron is stirred by the loadstone and the iron is lifted up, it moves toward where the stone points? Show me how the stone can do this and it will not astonish you how the Creator of nature is the mighty mover of a free-willed nature and that the inexpressible loveliness of God, discovered in the heart, lifts up, enkindles, fills, and joyously raptures it. Does not the stone draw the unmoved iron to itself? Then should the eternal heavenly Magnet not draw the hard and choked-up soul out of itself and guide it? How may suffering not become sweet when it is strewn with the tasteful heavenly sugar? Contrariwise, will not returned love’s sweetness lose its taste and grow bitter, as the common proverb has it: A tasty spirit, a reeking flesh! For God’s nature and character are the spirit of unmediated love, and where it stirs it creates, where it points it leads, and where it is tasted it makes glad. Furthermore, its particular character is to deprive flesh of its sweetness in the same way that sun dims the candle’s light. Moreover, its nature is also to sweeten pain, to console misery, to enliven weakness, to ease all labor, to change tears to laughter and sadness to joy. He who ventures it rejoices in suffering for Jesus’ sake, wants to bear Christ’s cross with him, and longs for the fires of temptation to purge his love and to eliminate all dross, rejoicing only in God and saying with Solomon’s bride:

Awake, O north wind,
and come, O south wind!
Blow upon my garden,
let its fragrance be wafted abroad.

That is, if temptation come from all sides to purge my virtues, they shall be like gold, and all who hear or see them shall be edified. O Holy Spirit! O sweet Guest of the soul! O Thou Life of man’s life! He who has Thee not, though he bear a living body, is yet dead before God! And he who has Thee never dies, even though the world lowers him in the grave! How much more necessary art

Thou to the soul—even more than soul to body! For where Thou art, there human death is the beginning of eternal life! In Thee, Holy God, do we abide. In Thee do we dwell. In Thee are we moved to sanctity! And all through Jesus Christ's merits, the one Redeemer of the world, in whom God's inexpressible mercy and love for us was so clearly revealed and so fashioned and firmly impressed in our hearts by Thee, O Holy Spirit, that we may understand nothing but love from Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We can no more adopt and retain a strange god than we can be shown another mercy and love so immeasurable. It is true, and it often happens, that evil deeds are done, as we expect from the future Antichrist. It is also true that Thy enemies, O heavenly God, may be shown in the human view to be more possessed of externalities before Thee; they are made rich, powerful, and the like. But these are uncertain signs of the true love. Suffering and dying for the beloved's sake—these are the sure signs of love when they happen for God's will; these show us a love sufficient unto sanctification! If they happen for the sake of a friend, they demonstrate the highest human love, as our Lord Jesus has said: Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. But when it climbs higher to the point where a man lays down his life for his enemies, it shows God's single love. We read about the Antichrist that, as far as possible, he will let himself be outwardly seen, like Christ, in miracles and other deeds, maybe even better. As said above, he will give wealth and power to those who believe on him; he will draw the powerful to himself and, with fear and fright, he will gruesomely macerate, martyr, and murder those who will not believe on him. But they will not want to suffer for their enemies or to die for those who hate them. Therefore, not only is their love not divine, but it is not even in the highest degree of human love. That is why the evidences of the Antichrist's love remain powerless. Only from Christ does God's highest love show itself. Only from him flow the waters of grace. And there is no other name by which man may be saved than in the sweetest name Jesus. To him do all of us who love God direct our desire, for in him do we find all that we need and must seek for our salvation.

XXI. THE SUREST SIGN, BOTH OF OUR WHOLE LOVE FOR GOD AND OF GOD'S GRACIOUS LOVE FOR US, IS PERFECT EMPTINESS OF SPIRIT

The heart of the true lover of God above all things becomes empty of creatures when it has climbed to the high point of love, so that nothing but God freely dwells within it and all creatures have been driven out. As long as this does not happen, all evidences of the divine indwelling are uncertain, suspect, or untrustworthy. But when a person forsakes himself and all creatures, forgetting this life, worth, and salvation, seeking only God's honor wherever his will may bring him, to his saints or to shame, daily denying himself, and judging no one as hard as himself,

then without doubt God dwells in him and he is full of God. Therefore it is a great grace, and not God's wrath, when he lets man see that there is no trust, faith, or abiding love on earth. He lets it be clearly known that men are obligated to love him, to give good for evil, to give love for treachery. This is the true way by which God in heaven, with particular grace, makes flesh weary of flesh and binds spirit to spirit. So ask God to make you weary of yourself and of all creatures, and take it for a remarkable evidence of God's love for you when you become hateful to yourself and do not love anything in any measure. For as long as you cling to anything that is not God, you are and remain uncertain whether God dwells in you or not, and whether he abides in you without your knowing it. And he will not clearly come to you unless all other loves have departed from you. Of this Paul says: Those who build with straw, hay, and wood on the holy foundation will be sanctified because they love God above all things, not because, through fire and because of it, they love other things alongside of God. However, those who have purged and purified their silver, gold, and precious stones of all impurities and imperfections build on the true foundation—on the love of God above all things. They do not need to pass through the fire because they love God only in the form in which he is to be loved, in the dearest friends, to whom he stands so near that, according to the evangelist's teaching, he has come to hate father, mother, brother, sister, and his own soul. Those who thus love have escaped hell because they love God above all things. They are also freed of all earthly sorrow when they employ suffering love to serve eternal joy, when their hearts so yearn for God that they find nothing higher than him, and when they seek, in so far as it is possible, to become like him in all things. Those who love so highly have nothing to which to cling except utter poverty of spirit. Therefore they bear nothing else on earth than suffering love, as our Lord Jesus bore nothing but suffering love. For in love alone was he conceived, born, circumcised, driven from his country, become obedient to Joseph, baptized, and tempted! Out of love alone did he preach, work miracles, and break his restful sleep! Out of especially great love did he forsake his holy mother, his dearest friends, and his apostles to sweat the bloody sweat in death's needy hour, to endure prison, stripes, false witness, false judgment, mockery, beating, crownings with thorns, condemnation unto death, the heavy cross, bitterness, and death! Therefore thanks, honor, and praise be unto Thee forever and ever. Amen.

Heresy and the Lutheran Church

BY ROBERT PAUL ROTH

FROM the beginning of the church there have been two major heresies: Judaizing works-righteousness and Hellenizing gnosticism. The one holds that we are saved by what we do, the other that we are saved by what we know. Both are heresies because they deny God's grace. Paul asked the Hebrew Christians of Galatia: "Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law, or by hearing with faith" (Gal. 3:2)? And to the Hellenic Christians of Corinth he said: "When I came to you, brethren, I did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (I Cor. 2:1).

The first heresy was Jewish legalism, but the second was Greek gnosticism. And the message of Scripture is that there is neither Jew nor Greek, but all are one in Christ Jesus. The legalist is offended by the loftiness of Jesus, the gnostic is offended by his lowliness. The legalist finds Jesus claiming the prerogatives of God, thus upsetting the law; and hence in varying degrees from synergism to Judaism the legalist cuts Jesus down to human size. If he is not crucified as a blasphemer, he is rendered impotent as a mere moral example. The gnostic, on the other hand, finds it difficult to fit Christ into the flesh of Jesus. It is unthinkable for him that God the Spirit should embrace inherently evil, earthly flesh. This, too, has a variety of expressions from ancient Docetism to modern Existentialism. The ancients said that Jesus was only an appearance of Christ, that he was not really, factually, the divine Spirit. The modernists say that Jesus was only the occasion for the *event* of the revelation of Christ. Christ is the word that is used to symbolize the eternal event that comes to us in the moment of faith. But the historical Jesus is minimized in importance because the testimony we have concerning him is too untrustworthy as a basis for faith.

When Christianity suddenly shifted from its Jewish matrix into the Hellenist world, the dominant heretical tendencies shifted from legalism to gnosticism. A chronological study of Paul's epistles will reveal this quick turn of emphasis. The problems that confronted the church in the ecumenical councils that met in the centuries that followed were chiefly concerned with the gnostic heresy. But in the days of Luther a reverse shift necessitated a new grappling with the demon of legalism. The great work of the Reformation was the refutation of the hierarchical apparatus of penitential merits with the positive proclamation of justification by faith alone. But just as Paul was confronted by gnosticism as soon

as he put down the legalists, so Luther was confronted by fanaticism as soon as he put down the papists. While the papists wanted to settle salvation on works of penance, the fanatics wanted to possess the Spirit through a mentalistic, emotional way of salvation akin to the gnostic heresy. Just as Platonic idealism threatened the purity of the Christian revelation in the Greco-Roman culture, so German idealism, which was really a revival of Plato, threatened the purity of the Gospel in the Renaissance-Enlightenment culture of Western Christendom.

The position of the Northwest Synod of the United Lutheran Church in America against the Rev. George Crist might well be clarified in the light of this sketchy analysis of heresy in the history of the church. Through a trial committee the synod judged Mr. Crist guilty of "deviation" from the Confessions of the church. What is the nature of his deviation? Is it a matter of mixed-up semantics? Does it involve peripheral matters which are not essential to the faith?

An examination of the statements made by Mr. Crist in the proceedings of his trial during the year 1955 will reveal that his case is neither semantic nor peripheral, but rather that his deviation is that of modern gnosticism of the adoptionist variety.

Perhaps it is unfortunate that some have hastened into print with highly critical comments on the action of the Northwest Synod, but on the other hand this expression of opinion has served to make the issues of current theology more clear. It was asserted in *The Lutheran*, official publication of the United Lutheran Church in America, that the issue is a "mix-up regarding the meaning of words."

The [prosecuting] committee skated close to heresy itself in seeming to disregard the central Lutheran teaching that we are saved through faith, not through assenting to "literal facts." Facts are man-made. The great discoverers are the scientists who study the universe with ardent attention. . . . They learn much about what God has created, but by no scientific method can they discover God. . . . Faith is God-made. In his love for us he reveals himself to us in our Lord Jesus, if we have enough humility to lay aside our pride in human wisdom. (Oct. 19, 1955, p. 50.)

It is true that no man can be saved from sin and death by being informed about facts. Salvation is not knowledge in the form of information. We are saved by grace through faith, not by sight through knowledge. But it is not true that faith stands in contrast to or apart from facts. Faith is the gift of God by which we receive regeneration from the curse of death, forgiveness of sins, and the power to walk in communion with the living Christ in the Spirit. All these are facts, for the word *fact*, coming from the Latin, means an actual thing done in contrast to something which is only potential, theoretical, virtual, hypothetical,

imaginary. Faith is therefore ineluctably tied to certain facts and actual events and substances which are not imaginary fictions.

In the above quotation it is assumed that the definition of fact is that which can be empirically demonstrated. This is too narrow. It would be better to distinguish empirical-fact from faith-fact, and thereby recognize that some facts are actualities which can be detected by the senses while other facts are actualities which can be received only by the Spirit, although always by means of some sense fact. Never can we say, however, that facts are man-made. They are always posited in experience, whether sense experience or faith experience. They are given to us from outside. They are not invented, but discovered. The scientist does not make his facts, but he does make interpretations of them. For this reason scientific laws are never absolute, but always, like a railway time-table, subject to change without notice. Scientific laws are convenient, short-hand descriptions of a collection of factual data. The data are the things *given* to the scientist to describe and control. How he understands the data depends upon the constructs of his mind, by which he arranges the percepts into meaningful patterns. These constructs and meanings will vary from age to age, as they have from Ptolemy to Copernicus to Einstein. Once given, however, the fact does not change. It has an absolute quality of unrepeatability. Such are all facts of history, including those witnessed and recorded in the Bible. Any claim that such facts or reports of facts are inconceivable is purely subjective, arising from individual mental antecedents. Inconceivability does not mean incredibility, nor does such a claim annihilate the fact or the report of it.

It should be noted that not all facts recorded in the Bible were witnessed by the senses—as, for example, the creation. This means that creation is not a sense-fact but a faith-fact. There were other facts recorded as having been witnessed, however, and to deny their actuality would be to deny the relevancy of any faith concerning them. The virgin birth, the miracles of Jesus, and the empty tomb belong in this category. These facts were witnessed by those involved, apart from faith, and are therefore properly defined as sense-facts. The virgin birth, of course, involved Mary and Joseph, and ultimately Mary was the only witness. Without faith such an actuality could have been interpreted by Joseph, as the record intimates, as due to unfaithfulness, or it could be rationalized by any number of world views—for example, by appeal to spirits, demons, parthenogenesis, etc. But by faith this mysterious fact is seen to be the miracle of God. Jesus is not Messiah because he was born of a virgin, but because he is Messiah he was in fact born of a virgin. The same is true of the empty tomb, which was witnessed by those who became believers as well as by the guards who spread the rumor that the body was stolen. Indeed, the tomb was first examined in disbelief by Mary Magdalene as well as Peter. Again the fact can be rationalized, as by the story of the stolen body, or it can be received in faith as the miracle of God.

But as Christians we are in every case dealing with a sense-fact which is received as a faith-fact by the power of the Spirit.

Faith-facts, unlike scientific laws, are dogmatic. They are not subject to change. They are the substance of the Gospel of which Paul said: "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8).

Certainly it is not the intellectual apprehension of either faith-facts or sense-facts that saves, but it is by the confession of the lips that we know what a man believes. By what a man says and does he communicates his spirit to others, and in this way alone is it possible to determine whether he has the same Holy Spirit in common with other members of the body of Christ. When his confession differs from the common confession of the church, he must be judged heretical.

Since the church has consistently maintained that faith-facts and sense-facts concerning Jesus of Nazareth cannot be separated (in John: "The Word became flesh," in Paul: "In him dwells the whole fulness of deity bodily"), then it will be possible to show that Mr. Crist means something different from what the church confesses. Thus he said: "I have held and now claim to hold as an opinion the fact that Jesus was born of Joseph and Mary" (p. 155, trial proceedings). And, "This Christ, this Jesus, was a normal, ordinary, natural, human being. He was born of a woman and a man" (p. 122). There can be no ambiguity of meaning here.

The same is true concerning the empty tomb. When Mr. Crist was asked what became of the body of Jesus, he said: "Well, I imagine myself that what happened to it is what happens to all bodies: dust to dust" (p. 186). When he was asked about the meaning of the New Testament stories of the resurrection, he said to the examining committee of the synod on June 30, 1955: "They are expressions of Christian faith that Jesus is Lord, a faith independent of the alleged facts about the physical resurrection" (Examining Committee Reports, June 30, 1955, pp. 3, 4). "Faith does not rest upon or require historical antecedents and explanations" (p. 168, trial proceedings). "The corpse of Jesus did not become a living body by the power of the resurrection" (p. 125).

Concerning the ascension he said: "The ascension is quite obviously nothing more than a means of ending the resurrection appearances" (p. 144). "It must be said of all these events that faith is not bound to the description we have of them, even if it could be determined precisely what the descriptions say" (p. 156). Concerning the living lordship of the risen Christ he said that Jesus does not love us now because he is not here. "I do not believe or teach that Jesus hears prayer" (p. 278).

Now, it must be admitted that if faith is not bound to the record we have

in the Scriptures, we are free to attach it to any figment of imagination or any construct of human reason. Then faith is divorced from fact and becomes fiction.

This divorce of faith from fact is precisely the gnostic heresy, for gnosticism was in ancient times a philosophical religion spun out by the human reason to satisfy certain cravings of the human spirit for release from the frustrations of guilt, meaninglessness, and death. Indeed, all natural religions attempt to speak to these defeats. But Christianity alone provides the victory in the historical fact of Jesus who is the Christ, and it is openly admitted in the proclamation concerning Jesus that he is an offense to the Jew and foolishness to the Greek. This fact was not invented, but given.

The second serious charge has come from Reinhold Niebuhr. He has written:

Heresy trials almost inevitably revolve, as the Wisconsin trials do, around peripheral articles of faith. The young men are accused, among other things, of not believing in the virgin birth of Jesus or in his "physical resurrection" or ascension. Are these beliefs really tests of the quality of faith? . . . Does not any interpretation which makes acceptance of miraculous historical events the test of faith reduce the spiritual quality of that faith . . . ? The issue raised in Wisconsin involves the validity of the religious symbolism. All symbols of the eternal, particularly those which assert the divine validity and revelatory power of events in history, must be taken seriously but cannot be taken literally. (*The Lutheran*, Dec. 21, 1955, p. 18.)

In the first place, the great heresy cases in history included the Judaizers of Galatia, Arius, Pelagius, Hus, Wyclif, Luther. Can it be said that any of these cases revolved around peripheral matters? In the second place, the virgin birth, the physical resurrection, and the ascension do test the confession of faith concerning Jesus because if they are taken away the incarnation itself is taken away. In the third place, Dr. Niebuhr's reference to the "spiritual quality" of faith is an unguarded give-away of his own gnostic tendencies. He is clearly using the word *spiritual* in contrast to *material*, which is Platonic usage, not scriptural. "Spiritual" means godly in opposition to that which is ungodly or fleshly, but not in contrast with material. That which is crassly material (such as the raising of the body of Lazarus, walking on water, the physical elements of bread and wine) is also, because of the sanctifying power of Christ, made holy and spiritual.

But the most enigmatic statement of Dr. Niebuhr is the one which says that *all* symbols of the eternal must be taken "seriously but cannot be taken literally." The incarnation is a symbol of the eternal. Is this to be taken seriously but not literally? Once again, the gnostics from Basilides to Arius took these things seriously but they were pronounced heretics precisely because they did not take them literally. Arius was not in so serious a case as Niebuhr, however, because he at least admitted that the Word became flesh, although he said there was a time

before which Christ did not exist. Niebuhr is saying that the symbols concerning the eternal cannot be taken literally. Does he mean, then, that the Word did not literally become flesh? Is the event of Jesus in history only the occasion for a divine revelation? The church has always said more, that the event of Jesus was not only the occasion of revelation but that Jesus was himself the revelation. He is not properly understood in terms of an existential event, but only in scriptural terms as the living, personal Lord who effectively rules over history, both cosmic and personal. It is true that language symbols pointing to eternal realities, due to an inescapable creaturely anthropomorphism, fall short of conveying the full meaning of the eternal, as the term "Father," when applied to God, means more than when applied to man because God is *revealed* in Christ Jesus as *Deus absconditus*, but when the symbol *Jesus* is connected with *Christ* the symbol and the thing symbolized are identified. When Thomas bowed at the feet of the risen Jesus he did not confess: "You are the event which clarifies the mystery of the divine and gives meaning to the human situation!" He confesses that *Jesus* was Lord and God.

It is on the doctrines of incarnation and atonement that Mr. Crist's "deviation" is most apparently gnostic. He says concerning the incarnation: "This was his sonship, that he gave himself to this Spirit, lived in and by it; the mature, free, choosing, deciding, self-giving Jesus lived in and by this Spirit which is the Spirit of God. He lived in perfect obedience to it" (p. 282). This statement inevitably leads to adoptionism, the view that Jesus was an ordinary human who was raised to Messiahship by God's will of adoption, but this is plainly the reverse of the message proclaimed in Scripture. Jesus is not proclaimed as Messiah because he was obedient to the Spirit of God, but rather because he was the Son of God he is found to be obedient. Furthermore, Mr. Crist seriously objects to the worship of Jesus, whom he fears we will make into an idol. "I think there is danger in objectifying Jesus, and this danger is the danger of idolatry" (p. 292). Again he drives a wedge between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith, as if the Jesus of history were only the occasion for the revelation of the Christ of faith and not the identical continuous person. Here, too, the symbol is taken seriously, but not literally. Moreover, Mr. Crist's insistence upon Spirit in his testimony shows a serious error in equating God the Holy Spirit with a nebulous spirit which can only be designated as the God-idea and not the personal Comforter of Scripture.

On the atonement Mr. Crist says:

I do not know why it was necessary for God to become man (p. 195). It seems to me Jesus saw no special importance in the dying, no cosmic, no universal forever-and-ever-and-everybody-in-history significance in his dying. He wasn't dying for me or for you. He was dying because it was the only way he could live as he

saw he had to live (p. 316). So that when we talk about his dying for us, it is not saying anything about his intention, but of our attitude toward it (p. 318.)

Again, the church has consistently maintained throughout the centuries that Christ's death was an effective and victorious sacrifice for my personal sin as well as the sin of the world. Scripture testifies repeatedly and authentically that the Son of man must suffer many things and be killed, that the Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many, that Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Either Jesus did something eternally effective for me on the Cross, or he did not. If he did not, as Mr. Crist says, a high religion can still be built upon the basis of my attitude toward that historical event and the meaning I draw out of it, but it will not be the Christian faith as it is proclaimed in the Bible. The same thing is true concerning the incarnation: either Jesus is in fact (seen by faith in the man of Nazareth) the incarnate Word, or he is not. If he is not, a high religion can be built on my attitude toward this event, as in Bultmann's "decision for Christ," but it will not be the Christian faith as proclaimed in the Bible. In the incarnation Jesus had a miraculous birth. Such is the testimony of Matthew and Luke. Mark, John, and Paul presuppose it. But suppose the opposite could be demonstrated. We would then have the child born of human parents, a sinner like every other child in the race of Adam. Conceivably he could by virtue of his obedience to the Spirit be raised from the realm of the flesh to the realm of the Spirit. This would be his sonship. But the message of Scripture nowhere speaks of God as taking that which is conceived in sin and making him holy, hereby elevating him to Messiahship. Rather the Gospel tells of God taking that which was holy, himself, and putting himself into the womb of Mary, his chosen workshop, and becoming man, and thereby also becoming sin for us, subjecting himself to our curse, the curse of death, although he himself was sinless. Adoptionism would be a miracle too, but it is not the miracle Scripture proclaims. This is the miracle of the virgin birth, proclaimed as the fulfillment of the promise.

The Lutheran confession concerning Jesus Christ is best stated in Luther's explanation to the second article of the creed. "I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature . . . with his innocent sufferings and death. . . ." The incarnation means that we have in this one person the miracle of two natures, true God and true man. He is not half-God and half-man, as if by Mary he received his humanity and by the Spirit he received his divinity so that the physical nature of Jesus was somehow fused with the spiritual nature of Christ. The whole nature of Jesus was truly man and the whole nature of Jesus was truly God. It must not be thought that

true humanity involves sinfulness, however, for man's humanity is perverted in that he is conceived in sin. But Jesus was true man, unperverted as Adam was before he fell into sin. Adam and Christ are therefore in a sense comparable types, as Paul speaks of them in Romans 5, whereas Christ cannot be compared to any other individual in Adam's race. Adam is the head of the human race, and all who come after him and are under him are both physically and naturally bound to his sin. Christ was conceived not in sin, but by the Holy Spirit. This means that he was at once sinless and truly human. Being conceived by the Holy Spirit as no man in Adam's race is, he was sinless; being born of woman under the law as all men are, he was human.

It will do no good to try rationalistically to determine whether the male seed is the carrier of sin and whether the Holy Spirit fertilized a female ovum in Mary's womb. This is idle speculation and it misses the point, which is that every other birth is a natural procreation, whether by male fertilization or the accident of parthenogenesis, but this birth was a miracle of God, and as such it goes beyond the power of rational explanation. Speculation never stops at innocuous trivia but always seeks to prowl pruriently among the secrets of God like a peeping Tom. All we can say is that here was a man who came from God rather than merely from Adam, as all other men come. And coming from God he becomes the head of a new race. He becomes the second Adam, the New Man, and we become members of his body by a second birth just as by our first natural birth we were formerly members of the body of mankind, Adam's race. Thus while we were sons of Adam, now by this second birth we can become sons of God. Moreover, this second birth is not a gnostic, mentalistic, emotional experience; it is rather a godly miracle which happens by the calling and election of the Holy Spirit through Christ in his church. This incorporation into the body of Christ is Holy Baptism, by the material of water and the power of the Spirit.

In contrast to this, Mr. Crist offers us a picture of Jesus who is the son of the carpenter, whose body became dust, whose death had no universal significance or value, who does not now live to love and answer prayer, and whom it is dangerous to worship. It should be obvious that Mr. Crist's views are different in meaning concerning the fundamental articles of the Lutheran confession. Who will deny the Lutheran Church the right to prevent a man to speak for its faith when he preaches and teaches a gospel contrary to that which it has always preached?

Faith and Facts

BY MARTIN J. HEINECKEN

THIS is an attempt to clarify the distinction between "faith" and "fact." A warning must be issued at the outset against bracketing all who sometimes use the word "existential" with modern "gnostics." The word "existential," as it has come into vogue today, derives from Kierkegaard. His usage most certainly cannot be charged with gnostic heresy. In fact, as anyone can reassure himself by reading the literature, the term "existential" was used as a weapon precisely against the way in which German Idealism had reduced Christianity to a "gnosis" for which the saving events at a time and place are not crucial. Kierkegaard's most important work, the "Philosophical Fragments," makes clear the difference between that kind of coming to a knowledge of the truth in which the teacher is only a midwife assisting at the birth of an idea and a different sort of coming to a knowledge of the truth when the truth must actually be begotten in the learner. The first such coming to a knowledge of the truth is well illustrated by the awareness to which a man comes when he sees that in Euclidean geometry the sum of the interior angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles. Of such a truth a person is a mere spectator. He is not himself personally involved. He accepts a truth of this kind merely with the top of his head, without any passionate surrender or decision. Such a truth concerns only the relationship of ideas. Whether or not the world in space and time actually conforms with these relations of the ideas is a different question. At any rate, it is quite clear that when a man enters into the right relationship to the living God something happens to him which is quite different from this kind of an awareness of a God-idea, for the living God is not an idea in man's mind. The living God "encounters" or "meets" man at a time and a place and puts his claim upon man. When this meeting takes place something must happen to the human being, and this the Bible describes as a "new birth." The person must in his existence (that is, in his entire being and not just in the top of his head) be transformed, give up his trust in himself, surrender his autonomy, and receive a new heart. This is why Christianity is called an "existential transformation," and the sole intention of this language—which must always be understood in its context—is to keep Christianity from being confused with either a philosophical or a theological doctrine and to preserve it as the proclamation of the good news of God's saving acts for man's redemption. On this view Christianity is an "existential communication" when in the present encounter with the living God, proclaimed in the Gospel, God communicates no less

than himself—not just ideas about himself—to the total man in his existence. It is for this reason that terms like “crisis,” “event,” “encounter,” “either faith or offense,” etc., have come into prominence. When a man encounters God in Jesus, the Christ, Jesus is not just a teacher assisting at the birth of ideas from within, but he is that Teacher who alone can beget a new life in the learner, and such “begetting” is the prerogative of God alone. Whatever may be said, therefore, about this kind of “existentialism” (a term which, by the way, is not used by proponents of this understanding of the Gospel), it cannot be charged with gnosticism or a belittling of the “saving facts” which the Gospel proclaims. If there was no “saving event,” there is no good news to proclaim, for news is of events or else it is not news.

This leads us, then, to a further examination of the relation between “facts” and “faith.” We have already distinguished the “facts” of mathematics as constituting one class of “facts.” (All so-called truths of the reason, and not just of mathematics, belong here.) Obviously faith (in the sense of a relationship of trust in a God whose total claim is recognized and accepted, and not some kind of impersonal faith in the rationality of the universe) has nothing to do with the acceptance of these “facts” of mathematics. To accept them, all that is necessary is that one be a rational creature. Knowledge in this realm is indubitably certain. The mind is master of such truths.

But there are other so-called “facts” in ordinary, common-sense usage: happenings of which we become aware through sense perception. In distinction from truths of the reason we may simply call them “matters of fact.” They involve things, animals, persons, or whatever else there may be in the space-time world of which men become aware. In this realm man can never have indubitable certainty, but the best he can achieve is a degree of probability. There is absolute certainty only in the case of immediate sense perception, the eye seeing a patch of red, the ear hearing a bugle-like tone, the skin having the sensation of a sharp prick which may or may not be an hallucination. What degree of probability one has that such a sensation is not an hallucination depends on many factors, and normally people proceed without question, trusting quite naturally to the witness of their senses that, corresponding to their sense perceptions, there really are the space-time objects they conclude to be there.

In the same way generalizations are made which have a degree of probability depending on the accumulation of evidence. It is by no means absolutely certain that the sun will rise tomorrow, but on the basis of past performance it is highly probable. There are certain observed uniformities of nature which can be depended upon. Given the same atmospheric pressure water always boils at the same temperature. This yields an area that is under man’s control and makes purposeful action possible. The temptation it offers is the presumption that man can put himself into absolute control. The tremendous advances which have been made

in this area during the last four hundred years (and most of them during the past fifty) certainly are not to be belittled, and the promise they hold for the betterment of the human lot ought to be gratefully accepted as a gracious gift of God. But man ought by no means to presume that he can by these methods really control his destiny and even put some kind of coercion upon God. God remains absolutely sovereign, and it is witchcraft and idolatry of the worst kind for man to presume to autonomy. It is at the point of his guilt, at the point of death, that man's absolute impotence should become clear to him. Forgiveness of sins is the one thing that is not under man's control.

It is at this point, therefore, that we must introduce another series of "facts," the "saving facts" of God's self-disclosure and self-impartation. These are never discerned except where there is that inner transformation of which we have spoken. Revelation and faith are therefore always corollary, and where there is no faith (or offense) there is no revelation. This requires the distinction between events that simply happen, so to speak, on a horizontal plane, in the dimension of space-time, and in a traceable cause and effect sequence, and the entry into this space-time dimension of the Lord of all space and time. The best way of representing this is to speak of a vertical line breaking through into the horizontal. It is God confronting, meeting, speaking to, acting upon man at a specific time and place and making his presence felt. It is to this kind of self-revelation and self-impartation in a series of very specific events that the Bible witnesses. The culmination of these self-revelatory acts is in the incarnation. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Hebrews 1:1-2a).

But here is the crucial point. This revelation takes place in "hiddenness." It is never apparent to all and sundry that here is God, standing upon the earth. There is no way of "proving" to the skeptic that this is God. In other words, one cannot establish that a revelation has taken place in the same way that one establishes other historical events which are not this kind of peculiar revelatory event. The coming of God into the flesh for the salvation of men is discerned only by the eyes of faith. This makes Pentecost itself an integral part of the revelatory event. It is only in the light of Pentecost (that is, in the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit) that the true significance of the death and resurrection of the Lord is discerned. Before Pentecost there was only a group of confused and bewildered disciples, as is quite evident from the question which Luke records at the time of the ascension, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" It is only the gift of the Spirit which transforms the waiting assembly into a band of witnesses heralding the news of God's mighty act of deliverance to the ends of the earth.

This ought to make quite clear that mere contemporaneity in time did not

make one a real witness to the saving events. The presence of very God of very God in the true man Jesus, the carpenter of Nazareth, was not apparent to all bystanders. For everything that he did, a different explanation, which belied who he was, was found. It was not "proved" that he was the Messiah promised in the Old Testament, for he himself corrected and fulfilled all the current notions. It is futile, therefore, to say that the "saving facts," the "revelatory" and "redemptive" facts, are established in the same way and with the same degree of certainty as other historical events.

What is established with sufficient historical trustworthiness is a considerable body of fact which is not necessarily the testimony of believers. It is what might have appeared in the newspapers of the time had there been such things, to wit, that there was a man Jesus, a carpenter of Nazareth, who performed astounding miracles, who claimed the power to forgive sins, who accepted the publicans and sinners, who apparently claimed to be the Messiah, who upbraided Scribes and Pharisees, who got into trouble with the authorities, who spoke wonderful words of assurance such as never man spake, who said that he had come to give his life a ransom for many, and who predicted that he would be crucified and on the third day rise again. Then the report would go on that he actually was crucified and that there were many who claimed to have seen him alive and the place where they had laid him empty. There is overwhelming evidence of a group of witnesses, amazing all with their love and fervor, meeting together, claiming the risen Lord to be in their midst. Such are the facts, ordinary historical facts, established with the degree of certainty which exists for any events that happened 2000 years ago, when there were no busy reporters chasing after every stray dog and no *Congressional Record* reporting for posterity the coughs and belches of each illustrious senator. Included in the contemporary witness was also the fact that some said that the man Jesus was virgin born.

Now, the big question is whether this kind of contemporary witness is what we have in the New Testament and whether it is really this sort of thing which established the Christian church. Let us concentrate only on the death of the man Jesus on the cross and from there develop the difference between that to which the contemporary in time could witness and that which is the witness of "faith," that is, of "chosen" witnesses whom God quite arbitrarily chose in order to make known his will to them and send them out to proclaim the good news. A man was crucified with two thieves, although it is quite obvious that he was a different sort of man. Some might nevertheless conclude that he got what he deserved for making blasphemous pretensions—obviously either a deceiver or a mad man. Others might make a more charitable judgment and see a good man dying for the courage of his convictions—a gross miscarriage of justice, a supreme example of man's inhumanity to man and of the sublimity of unshakeable trust in God under the most adverse circumstances. But the one thing which would not

occur to any stander-by, even if he stood there and contemplated through countless ages, is the very thing to which a little band of men in the power of the Holy Spirit now began to witness, namely, that this man was suffering not at all for his own sin but for the sins of all the world, and that his suffering was the suffering of none less than God himself. How could he "see" this? How could he establish it with even a modicum of probability? First, he would have to feel his own sin and guilt and his need of this kind of suffering on the part of no one less than God. And this in turn would involve an awareness of the presence of a suffering God. So here we are in the midst of the testimony of an unfolding revelation. This not only takes us back to a coming of God himself into the flesh, but it takes us back into the counsels of eternity before the foundations of the world were laid. And so the whole "mystery" of revelation is laid bare to the one who is able to receive it. This is not just the death of a good man, but it is the victory over all powers of sin and evil, the victory of suffering love—and the resurrection is not only the coming back to life of one three days in the tomb. It is that, but it is something which certainly only the eyes of faith can discern. It is the final victory over death itself; it is the raising of humanity, which is subject to corruption, to incorruption; it means the living presence of that same one who suffered and died but is now raised to the right hand of power. These are the "saving facts" to which faith witnesses, and they are based upon actual events, but events which in themselves do not unambiguously "reveal" the presence of the Redeemer God. Offense and unbelief can find a different explanation for all that to which "faith" witnesses. So it is only the one who himself is born again through repentance and faith who discerns the saving fact: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself."

Keeping the Faith Abreast with the Times

BY RAYMOND T. STAMM

WHAT can the church do to win the hosts of men and women who "carry on" a deeply Christianized way of life at some remove from the main stream of the faith," but find "the standing patterns of church, worship and doctrine increasingly unreal and unrelated" to their life, and "are led often by their own integrity to detach themselves from the existing religious forms?" This is the problem which Dr. Wilder now discusses in the light of his previous works on *Eschatology and Ethics in the Teaching of Jesus* (1939, 2nd ed., 1950), and *Otherworldliness and the New Testament* (1954). His purpose is to help people who do not feel at home in a book that was written in the prescientific first century to see that the New Testament is as relevant to the spiritual need of our day as it was to the need of those who wrote it.

This task of commending the gospel in our time so that each one may hear it spoken "in his own language" (Acts 2:6) would be relatively easy if it were a matter merely of revising an antiquated English version of the Bible. But the modern interpreter has to face an atheistic materialism which, in the name of science, dismisses certain basic assumptions made by Judaism and Jesus and the first Christians as exploded myths. Rudolph Bultmann tries to meet this challenge by demythologizing the New Testament, and his proposal receives a judicious evaluation in the volume before us.

Central to the world-view of Judaism was "the idea that history had a goal in accordance with the divine purpose, and that this consummation had its antecedents in the acts of God in the past. The whole world story could not be charted then as a circle, a cycle or a spiral, nor, indeed, as an ascending line. Neither, indeed, could it be represented by a jagged line of crests and troughs, but rather as a letter U. Descent and ascent. A fall and a restoration. Lost and found. Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained. . . . The picture had its termini in the Creation and the Last Judgment, or more ultimately in the pre-creative purpose of God and the final new age" (p. 28).

The difference between this theological interpretation of history and the modern evolutionary world-view constitutes the problem which is involved in commending the New Testament faith for today so that those who have lost it may repossess it and those who have never had it may gain it. Dr. Wilder shows

1 A review of Amos N. Wilder, *New Testament Faith for Today*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955. \$2.50.

now to steer safely between the Scylla of static orthodoxy and the Charybdis of atheistic scientism, both of which pose the problem in terms of a fallacious alternative: either the Bible or science. The first of these alternatives regards the Bible as God's complete and final revelation to be interpreted literally and with nothing ever to be added or subtracted, and says, "He that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16, A.V.; Rev. 22:18-21). This approach will not allow the Holy Spirit to say anything new, but restricts his function to interpreting what stands written in the canonical Scriptures. The second alternative, no less presumptuous, treats the whole biblical framework of creation and redemption as a dangerous otherworldly unreality that dopes people and keeps them from their task of achieving Utopia on this earth.

The biblical and theological revival called neo-orthodoxy, which aims to defend the gospel against totalitarianism and secularism by recovering the basic message of the New Testament, has tried to avoid this false alternative which sets the Bible against science and says, "Choose!" But this type of theology, while doing justice to the vertical aspect of the gospel which gives hope to the individual for a life after death, has done injustice to the horizontal aspect by failing to recognize "that the late Jewish and early Christian modification of the earlier messianism adds the resurrection hope and the eternal hope without cancelling the social hope" (p. 97). While it rightly rejects the idea of *automatic* progress, it wrongly refuses "even any expectation of substantial and enduring gains in human well-being" (p. 96). Consequently, in opposing the irreligious concept of evolutionary progress without God, this type of theology has developed a onesidedness of its own which prevents it from offering a completely satisfying interpretation of New Testament faith for today. The traditional language which this biblical and theological revival continues to employ has become meaningless to increasing numbers of thinking people in this age of science. "While these interpreters hold no doctrine of verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, they nevertheless insist on the unchanged validity today of the particular terms, formulas and conceptions in which the message clothed itself in the first century" (p. 36).

With this situation in mind, Dr. Wilder discusses the proposal to demythologize the New Testament. He recognizes Bultmann's honesty and constructive purpose in facing the issue, and he makes clear the difference between Bultmann's method of interpretation and the effort to get at an original essence of Christianity by peeling off the outer layers of later tradition. Bultmann "has always insisted that he does not propose to eliminate the mythical features in the Gospel with a view to identifying a historical remainder. He is concerned rather with distinguishing a perennial kerygmatic or confessional aspect from the mythical, and the former is understood as the living word of God addressed to faith" (p. 171).

But this method of arriving at a timeless kerygma for faith is bound to be misunderstood, because in the popular usage a "myth" is a tale of something that

never happened or does not exist, and anything so described is liable to be thrown out as unhistorical, together with the actual religious experience which has produced it and caused it to be transmitted to us through the centuries. "The final test," says Dr. Wilder, "will be whether the rich blessings which inhere in the New Testament symbols are carried over into the new formulation with all their proper normative significance" (p. 172). With a poet's insight, he observes that a prodigious faith like that of Jesus projects its own vision upon the world and creates its own language (cf. I Cor. 2:13, R.S.V., margin). Hence in understanding the Christian deliverance from bondage into freedom, and in proclaiming it cogently, "we surely cannot forego the mythopoetic categories of the New Testament" (p. 176). "The great fables and myths of the peoples sum up large aspects of experience, gathering up blind circumstances and incoherent elements into a revealing pattern. It is the peculiar prerogative of faith to carry this out to ultimates" (pp. 55-56).

The New Testament uses figurative representation, most of which is "old and familiar imagery and motif, weighted with meaning through generations, evocative and reproductive of older experience, sentiments and loyalties" (p. 64). "Myth, then, like art, offers a report of the world, 'news of reality.' The importance of the truth represented, or the proportion of truth to error, depends upon the experience and wisdom of those who shaped the myth" (p. 69). As compared with the myths of Greece, the biblical myth "is more general, more important and more true because it arose out of a society living at an increasingly personal level. It is particularly in its moral concern and in its related view of creation, history, time and judgment that its differentia appear. To speak of it as myth except with great caution is therefore misleading" (pp. 70-71).

"There is no necessary contradiction between the 'rational' and the 'imaginative'" and the range and subtlety of human understanding and statement should not be "canceled out by a reductive rationalism" (p. 62). "The symbols used in the past as vehicles of revelation convey its quality and meaning better than our dogmatic or rationalized equivalents." But this "does not mean that bold attempts may not be made in any generation to go behind the language of faith of the New Testament in an effort to convey its import more adequately for the new day. So long as the proposed contemporary equivalents are controlled by the original faith and by the Christian experience of the present, this is a necessary aspect of Christian witness and defense. In fact, it is a necessary way of retaining contact and encounter with the Gospel" (p. 170).

After preparing the ground by a general discussion of the language of faith, Dr. Wilder applies these principles to a study of "the proclamation of Jesus" (Mark 1:15), "the message of Paul" (Rom. 1:17; 11:22), and "the Johannine witness" (John 12:31; I John 5:4). He says that "if there is one confusion more than any other which is responsible for the apostasy from Christianity of intellec-

tuals and those they have influenced everywhere in the Western world and in communist lands, it has to do with this charge of otherworldliness and asceticism" (p. 92). Hence in these three chapters he is concerned to show that this charge cannot be sustained against Jesus and Paul and John.

The transcendental imagery which Jesus used must not be literalized, hardened, and misinterpreted as evidence of otherworldliness on his part: "It does not represent escapism. It is an affirmation of life, here and hereafter, both" (p. 89), and "only a complete misunderstanding of Jesus' outlook can ascribe to him an otherworldly asceticism or an indifference to man's actual life in this world" (p. 91).

A distinction is made between what Jesus himself spoke and what the first Christians, who reported and transmitted his teachings, added. He spoke of "the immediate coming of the heavenly Son of Man-Judge to usher in the new age, but he does not speak of the end of the 'world.' It is the Gospels which fill in the picture with their details of the Great Assize and the adjudication of final rewards and penalties" (p. 86). This wonderful new age to which the righteous dead would arise "did not mean 'the end of the world' or dissolution of the creation, but rather the transformation of the creation. . . . The fact is that the Jewish outlook shared by Jesus did not distinguish sharply between an earthly future and a transcendental future. The two were commonly merged" (p. 87). "A degree of fulfillment of God's work in history and society is a proper application of his outlook. The sublime Tomorrow which he forecast includes this hope, too, though we must be as serious with his theme of judgment as with his theme of promise" (p. 95).

Similarly, Paul never thought of atonement for individuals apart from a general world renewal. His redemption had also a political and cultural meaning. "It is not first of all a transaction of the soul with God at the moment of baptism or in the Eucharist, or in some hour of private meditation and ecstatic foretaste of eternal life. Redemption involves the tyrants of the forum, the market place and the hearth; the false dogmas of the state and the economy; the idolatries and spells of social traditions as they appear in inflexible conventions and complacencies; and the insidious authorities of unreason and passion that speak through propaganda and mass media. . . . Paul's converts were the beneficiaries of a tremendous social emancipation as well as of a spiritual rebirth. His doctrine of atonement ceases to be unreal wherever we discover its bearing on these continuing tyrannies and whenever we attain in Christ to actual mastery in these death struggles both for ourselves and for our fellow men" (pp. 140-141).

The history of interpretation shows how much easier it has always been to abstract a timeless proclamation (kerygma) from the letters of Paul than from the Synoptic Gospels, which are more concerned with events that happened once upon a time and are not reproducible in the lives of succeeding generations of believers. In this respect the Gospel of John has enjoyed an even greater advantage.

As Dr. Wilder observes, this Gospel "appears to have been less vulnerable to the great succession of shocks to the Bible that have come from the rise of modern science and rationalism, from the work of Copernicus and Darwin, and from modern historical method" (pp. 142-143).

Whereas the biblical time scheme and picture of history which Dr. Wilder has represented by the letter U has come to seem unreal as a "smashed" myth to multitudes of modern thinking people, the Gospel of John lifts the discourses of Jesus out of time and sublimates the Synoptic and apocalyptic eschatology by emphasizing *present* judgment and eternal life for the individual which begins here and now. Because it shifts the emphasis from eschatology to mysticism, this Gospel can be more easily abstracted from the political and cultural environment out of which it originated. Read thus as a philosophy of being, it has become all things to all interpreters. So the Gospel of John has been literalized and allegorized; Platonized and gnosticized; evolutionized and eschatologized; realized and existentialized, all in accordance with the particular philosophical and theological angle from which it is approached.

Whatever the approach, no interpretation of the Gospel of John can be justified if it fails to take into account the fact that its author does not abolish the basic Old Testament view of history and the Jewish "plan of salvation." "Even where he uses terms and conceptions drawn from a pagan background: light, life, truth, vine, shepherds, etc., even where he uses such contrasts as light and darkness, truth and falsehood, in all such cases we can note how all these elements are conformed to the Christian message" (p. 152). "Eternal life in John does not mean a timeless state or the 'eternal Now'" (p. 155). There is indeed a certain degree of abstraction in the Gospel of John: "But the supreme marvel of the writing lies in the way our life in time is related to ultimates, and in the sense it gives to us that the days of our years can and do receive ineffable meaning from the divine immanence as well as from the divine transcendence" (p. 156).

These are some of the characteristics of the Gospel of John which, throughout its history, have made it the favorite Gospel of those who are seeking to commend the Christian way of salvation by showing the continuing contemporaneity of a changeless Christ in a changing world. So, for example, it was with Martin Luther with his selective principle for canonicity, "Was Christum treibt"—that which deals with salvation by God's grace alone, through faith in Christ; with Henry Drummond in his effort to show that Christianity can make room for a theistic concept of evolution; and with Rudolf Bultmann in his desire to make the Christ event even more than a bygone something that happened once upon a time but is not relevant for the present age of science.

From the days of Philo Judaeus, one method of keeping the Bible continuously applicable to the growing knowledge and changing situation of each new generation has been to interpret it allegorically. By this method the interpreter reads a higher

"spiritual" truth into the Scripture whenever he finds that its literal meaning is irrelevant to his own life. Thus a whole philosophy of life can be read into the Bible, and then out again, reinforced and sanctioned as divine revelation. But this method, although still employed by some, has long since been discredited.

Bultmann, having adopted existentialism with its emphasis on will, choice and decision as the most satisfying way of commending the Christian religion to the scientific mind of today, seeks the sanction of Scripture by a different approach. After dissecting the Gospel of John into a number of hypothetical sources, he evaluates them and then abstracts from them a proclamation (*kerygma*) which is astonishingly like his existentialism. In forming his version of the Christian gospel, he simply leaves out of account the myths which are unacceptable and the miracles which are not reproducible today. He "would have us rest our Christian witness to the saving events upon the pure word of faith divorced from the 'mythology'" (p. 176).

But even if Bultmann could prove that he is not arguing in a circle and that his source analysis is correct, the question would be whether existentialism is a satisfactory framework in which to set the gospel for today. "Any modern philosophy will have its special liabilities when used as the framework for the presentation of the Gospel. In the case of existentialism it is in the areas of the doctrine of God and of the creation that the liability is greatest. Existentialism understands man and his situation, but leaves the role of God and the realm of nature in the dark. But the Bible's mythology of creation must be given its rights. Moreover, existentialism also fails to give any adequate account of *how* men are delivered from bondage into freedom, and even such a Christian version of it as Bultmann offers has great difficulties" (p. 176). "It is especially in connection with the Fourth Gospel's understanding of the cross as itself the moment of the exaltation and glorification of Christ that Bultmann plausibly follows this line of thought. That is, the gnostic elements in John furnish a natural bridge to an existential understanding of the whole revealing event. Criticism of this view of the resurrection of Christ has been drastic and cogent. It is at this point especially that Bultmann has had to pay too high a price for the main *schema* he has borrowed from existential philosophy, with all its advantages" (pp. 177-178).

This double failure to take account of the realm of nature and to explain *how* the eschatologist expects *God* to deliver men from bondage into freedom is the great fault that vitiates much of the Christian apologetic today. And when to this failure there is added the cultural pessimism which insists on discontinuity between history and the kingdom of God, no amount of demythologizing can avail the demythologizer to make his interpretation really adequate to commend the Christian religion to the scientific mind.

Unfortunately, these faults are chargeable against the Report of the Evanston Assembly's Advisory Commission on "Christ—the Hope of the World" (1954).

Dr. Wilder characterizes this Report as "in many respects a notable and in parts a magnificent testimony, and one which powerfully relates the Christian hope both to various false hopes and to particular aspects of the Christian life." But he also points out that the Report has "not radically undertaken" the task of interpreting the biblical imagery in which this hope is expressed. "Many members of the Commission represented churches whose members find no difficulty in the traditional biblical images. Yet in presenting the Christian understanding of hope to the world these interpreters should have had in mind the vast multitudes of modern men including many believers for whom these canonized formulas constitute stumbling blocks" (p. 103).

Finding it difficult to relate this Report to the motivation of Christian social action, the Evanston Assembly has referred it to the churches for further study and discussion. But whatever may be done by way of interpreting its biblical language to men today, we must not lose sight of the fact that the real difficulty with this Report is not so much with its language as with the cultural pessimism which has permeated it. To the builders of twentieth century civilization who are striving to Christianize our human social order it seems to be saying: What you are building is not the kingdom of God, but only patchwork that stands under the judgment of God, who may not choose to conserve even the best that you can do by taking it up into his eternal kingdom, which he will bring without the help of men.

No amount of demythologizing and explaining the terms, formulas and conceptions of the first century in twentieth century language can prevent or cure the paralysis of Christian social action which will be the logical consequence of this philosophy of discontinuity between the kingdom of God and the evolution of human society on earth. This cultural pessimism is a far greater hindrance to commending New Testament faith for today than the myths and miracles which the demythologizers want to exclude from their gospel (*kerygma*). Those who are under the spell of this pessimism draw the conclusion that "any assured human felicity such as is announced in the messianic hopes of the Old Testament must be assigned to a new creation or to a life beyond death" (p. 96).

"Such views," says Dr. Wilder, "would seem to reckon too lightly both with the story of human culture and with the power of the Holy Spirit. There is wisdom for us in these matters in the findings of anthropology as well as in Scripture. It is anomalous that the theologian should find himself in the company of the cynic in holding that there is no progress in matters that count. Common sense and competent cultural study appear to disagree. Theology is too often blinded at this point by some defensive dogma: it begrudges (like Jonah) any divine charities in the human story outside the rigid channels it would demarcate. Or theology overstates its timely warning against utopianism. Or theology is unduly swayed by contemporary tragedies. But the disasters of today should lead the theologian to con-

fession of the sins of his church and his nation rather than to a general cultural pessimism" (pp. 96-97).

On the other hand, the theologians are right who warn against reading the theory of a long, slow process of evolution into the New Testament. That would indeed be to allegorize the Scriptures. But the fact that the writers of the New Testament believed that the course of human affairs had at last reached the bottom of the U and that God was about to intervene at any moment to restore all things as they had been in the beginning does not mean that our modern theory of evolution, if interpreted as God's method of creation, is untrue and to be rejected. Adequately interpreted, John 16:12-15 implies that God's revelation of himself has never ceased, but is like his creation an ongoing, unfinished process. This is the Scriptural warrant for an inclusive concept of revelation which will embrace all the truth about God and his universe which has come to light since the Bible was written. There is no more justification for closing the canon of God's revelation than there is for allegorizing or demythologizing it.

Certainly the writer of the Gospel of John did not regard the canon of Scripture as closed. On this point Dr. Wilder quotes Ernst Käseman: "Revelation for him is no completed event to be preserved in the salvation-institution of the church. . . . It is the present Christ that legitimizes the tradition and not vice versa" (p. 163). Thus the Gospel of John "assigns primacy to the present dynamic activity of God without forfeiting the significance of the saving historical events of the past" (p. 164).

But this is not all. The function of the present Christ through the Holy Spirit is much more than simply to bring to remembrance and to legitimize the tradition of the past, which are not ends in themselves but the means which God employs to continue and extend his work of creation and self-revelation. Only by taking seriously this greater work of the Spirit which is described in John 14:12-14 and 16:12-15 can the churches begin to fulfill the commission which Jesus gave to his disciples on Easter afternoon: "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21).

Consequently we may have faith to believe that the discoveries of scientists and the aspirations of men today to transform human society are manifestations of this present dynamic activity of God just as truly as are the saving events of the past. We are not being disloyal to the Bible when we recognize that the conception of the course of history which is represented by the letter U is the way in which the writers of the Scripture and their first readers understood the purpose of God and the manner of his creation and dealings with his creatures, but that this conception does not prevent us from formulating theories of our own to take account of facts which were unknown in the first century. This approach permits the interpreter to do full justice to everything in the Bible without confronting people today with the man-made dilemma, either the Bible or science; it frees him from

the temptation to modernize the Scriptures by allegorizing them; and it avoids the reductive rationalism which, in rejecting the "myth" from its version of the gospel (kerygma), runs the risk of being understood as destructive in purpose, and of losing sight of the perennial elements of religious experience which have entered into the making of the myth and are reproducible in the life of today.

As Dr. Wilder says, "*Some* picture of the whole world story is necessary for the Christian faith. No great gaps of meaninglessness can be left. For the church there was such illumination in Christ that light from him shone back upon the past and even on origins and forward into the future and even upon the last things. And conversely the full significance of God's work in Christ could only be perceived in the light of God's earlier leadings and promises. To affirm these larger insights of faith the early Christians could only employ mythopoetic statement. We ourselves are under the same necessity" (p. 59).

This illumination in Christ is the light of faith that there is a God with a purpose, and that his creation, despite all that seems to the contrary, has meaning. And if we are asked what more warrant we have to accept the affirmation of this faith concerning purpose than we have to accept the cosmology and cosmogony with which it is bound up in the Bible, the answer again must be in the language of the Gospel of John, "Come and see," and "if any man's will is to do his (God's) will, he shall know whether the teaching is from God" (John 1:39, 46; 7:17). That is to say, faith is an adventure, and it has to be put to the proof of experience in the laboratory of life. Too often what passes for faith is really a demand that the Bible be so approached and interpreted as to enable us to walk by sight.

True faith is a projection into the unknown on the basis of facts known from past experience. It must vindicate itself, and be vindicated by God, in future living under any and all conditions, amid all possible changes, both within the observer and in his environment, as he cooperates with his Creator in his ceaseless, unfinished work of creation. One cannot even know that God is love except by taking it on faith and making this kind of creative response to him; and this imposes on faith a burden which is infinitely greater than that which is laid upon it by the shallow notion that faith can be freed from the necessity to trust and adventure by treating the Bible as if it were a collection of oracles tossed from a totally other world into the stream of history at the point where, for some unexplainable reason, history got bent into the shape of the letter U.

The only way, therefore, to commend New Testament faith for today is to make it crystal clear that faith is not sight but utter trust in God, expressing itself as a pioneer in God's infinite laboratory of life. And if this modern symbol of the laboratory has to be called a myth, we can only say with Dr. Wilder that we are under the same necessity of making *some* picture of the whole world story as the ancients were. The timeliness and the special value of his book lies in its stress upon the continuity of the Christian gospel with the Old Testament; in its insist-

ence on the social as well as on the individual aspects of salvation; and in its cautious handling of the "mythopoetical" element in the Scriptures so as to guard against losing the indispensable spiritual values it has for our life today. The best way to conserve these values is to listen not only to the old but also to the new things which the Holy Spirit has to say to us today, exploring and practicing all the implications of John 14:12-14, 26; 16:12-15, and 20:21 for a continuing revelation concomitant with God's unfinished, ongoing process of creation in which Christians are called by God's grace to cooperate. Then in proportion as Christians fulfill their vocation as critics of culture and as pioneers who visualize human society as it ought to be and labor to make it so, the problem of keeping New Testament faith abreast with the times becomes the problem of bringing the times abreast with the faith.

Correspondence and Comment

FOR YOU AND FOR MANY—
YES, BOTH

In an article in the February number of the *QUARTERLY* (pp. 61-68) the attempt was made to challenge, on the basis of Scripture, the teaching of the Confessions and of the church with regard to the Lord's Supper, and especially the "real presence." We should be grateful for this challenge to our teaching. For we should never allow ourselves the false comfort of assuming that we are right and that we need not concern ourselves with questions which we have "settled" in our own minds. Especially should we be careful to avoid complacency with regard to anything so central, so bound up with the life of the church, as the Holy Communion. Out of this lethargy the author has attempted to shake us. And for this we owe him a vote of thanks.

At the same time, there are several points in the article which I feel bound to answer, not in an attempt to reaffirm what is stated in the Confessions (although that will be the practical outcome of much that I have to say), but in order to correct what I feel are certain misinterpretations of the biblical records.

It may well be that our author has missed the Achilles' heel of the Confessions' statements. Indeed, the one point in them which he defends may well be their weakest point. I refer to the assumption that John 6 does not apply to the Communion. There are some who will back this position,

among them Reu,¹ Dods, and Meyer.² But the majority of modern scholars would seem to feel otherwise, among them Jeremias,³ Taylor,⁴ Lohmeyer, Andrews, Oulton, McGiffert, Hoskyns,⁵ Bacon, Broome, Goodenough, Kennett, Cirlot, and Alleman. Of especial interest are the arguments of Clarence T. Craig⁶ and Oscar Cullmann.⁷ Their main points are these: (1) John's inclusion of reference to blood and water pouring from the crucified Lord (19:34);⁸ (2) Jesus' refusal to explain away his apparent "cannibalistic" reference in 6:51-58, where he stresses his position by repeating it six times in all;⁹ (3) the inclusion of the allegory of the vine and the branches in the final discourse (15:1-8);¹⁰ (4) the use in chapter six of such characteristically eucharistic words as *didonai*, *huper*, *artos*, *haima*,

1 M. Reu, *Can We Still Hold to the Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's Supper?* (Columbus, 1941), p. 43.

2 H. A. W. Meyer, *A Critical and Exegetical Hand-book of the Gospel of John* (New York, 1891), p. 215.

3 Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (Oxford, 1955), *passim*.

4 Vincent Taylor, *Jesus and His Sacrifice* (London, 1937), p. 236.

5 E. C. Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel*, rev. ed. (London, 1947), p. 282.

6 Clarence T. Craig, "Sacramental Interest in the Fourth Gospel," in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LVIII (1939), pp. 31-41.

7 Oscar Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship* (London, 1953).

8 Craig, *loc. cit.*, p. 41.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 37.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 38.

phagein, pinein;¹¹ (5) the eschatological emphasis;¹² (6) the inclusion (6:53, 56) of "drink my blood," which neither the miracle of the feeding nor the reference to manna (6:49) would require;¹³ (7) the fact that manna is much more readily associated with the eucharistic bread than with Christ's life;¹⁴ (8) the characteristic plurality of meanings in John, e.g., *anōthen* and *pneuma* in chapter 3.¹⁵ Cullmann says, further, "*The implicit assumption of this Gospel is that the historical events, as here presented, contain in themselves, besides what is immediately perceptible, references to further facts of salvation with which these once-for-all key events are bound up*" (italics his).¹⁶ And Craig concludes, "No other evangelist goes so far in insisting upon the necessity of the saving sacraments of the church."¹⁷ Perhaps these men go too far. Certainly they would if they saw in John only the sacramental emphasis. But two facts remain: (1) That much of John is most readily explained in this fashion, e.g., a new commandment (13:34) that is not really new unless it is so interpreted; and (2) that this eucharistic interpretation of John 6 is backed both by Stauffer¹⁸ and (although he prefers to think of this section as the product of an ecclesiastical redactor) by Bultmann.¹⁹ The opposing giants of modern German scholarship for once agree, which is in itself an argument of no small weight. Finally, in view of the obvious nature of the parallel between John 6 and the Holy Communion, it would appear that the burden of proof must lie with those who say that no such parallel was intended by the evangelist.

Until they can demonstrate this, we must assume that John 6 does have definite bearing upon our theology of the sacrament.

Let me now turn to the author's individual considerations in an attempt to answer his most important arguments. I shall number my replies to correspond with his propositions.

1) The question as to whether Jesus could give his body before the crucifixion is the author's strongest argument. It has bothered a good number of scholars and theologians. However, in my opinion, it involves a false insistence upon temporal linearity. It also assumes that nothing outside of his physiology could be his body, whereas the church is in fact often so defined. It is, I feel, the efficacy, not the nature of the Supper which was dependent upon the crucifixion. In any case, if, as the author claims, Jesus gave his body after the manner of John 6, it would be in the Supper, as we have shown.

3) The difficulty in the association of *sōma* with eating is only apparent. According to Jeremias,²⁰ Jesus must have used the Aramaic words *dēn bisrī* and *dēn 'idhmī*. These terms do not clash with the Greek *sōma* and *haima*. On the contrary, the latter is

11 Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 96.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 101.

14 *Ibid.*, p. 98.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 50 ff.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 56.

17 Craig, *loc. cit.*, p. 34.

18 Ethelbert Stauffer, *New Testament Theology* (New York, 1955), p. 164.

19 R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (New York, 1951-1955), I, p. 147.

20 Jeremias, *op. cit.*, p. 140 ff.

always the translation of the corresponding Aramaic, and *sōma* appears twenty-three times in the Septuagint as the Greek equivalent of *bāsār*; indeed, except in its meaning of "corpse," it is usually associated with *bāsār*. Further, *sōma* may frequently be substituted for *sarx*, as Paul uses it in Romans 8:13.

4-7) In all these cases, where "given" is argued against the Confessions, the answer is that "given" does refer, as the author states in No. 5, to the Cross. The distribution, both then and today, is obvious in the act.

8) The absence of Judas in no way affects the "three shibboleths." They are dependent, rather, on the following:

a. *Sacramental union*. The term is unfortunate, since it might imply con-substantiation. Nevertheless, it is clear that John (6:52-58) had no doubt as to the identity of the elements with Christ's glorified body. That Paul felt the same way is shown by: (1) I Cor. 10:16, where *koinōnia* must mean more than fellowship to avoid duplication in the following verse. (2) In the same verse, to the Greek Christians, "these phrases could naturally mean only 'participation (with others) in the blood . . . and the body of Christ.'"²¹ (3) In 10:18-22 the association is with the Hellenistic and Oriental idea of participation in the deity by partaking of his table.²² (4) The verse 11:27 can mean nothing less than real presence, especially in the light of (5) 11:30, where the effects of unworthy participation are much too severe to warrant a symbolical interpretation.²³

b. *Oral manducation*. This in any case follows from (a) above, but is

made especially obvious from the strength of the verb *trōgō* in John 6:54.

c. *Communion of the unworthy*. This concept is based upon the whole tone of I Cor. 10 and 11, written because of just such corruptions in the church there. It follows, too, from the fact that there is no one who is "worthy" of grace.²⁴

11) With regard to the meaning of *touto* in the words of institution, it is quite possible that it here agrees by anticipation with *sōma*.²⁵ It is equally possible that it may be a liturgical harmonization from the neuter concerning the cup, where the spoken antecedent is definitely the neuter *potērion* (Mark 14:23). Or it may simply be due to the fact that *tout' estin* is a common idiom in the later Greek . . . and is exactly equivalent to the Latin *id est* and has no regard to case, number, or gender.²⁶ In any case, Jesus is speaking here of the bread which he holds, as Jeremiah has shown conclusively.²⁷

14) To say that the resurrection is not involved in the promise of Holy Communion, one must assume that John 6:54 does not count. Further, in

21 J. Y. Campbell, "Koinonia and Its Cognates in the New Testament," in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LI (1932), p. 375. His whole development sheds light here, and is worth reading.

22 Reu, *op. cit.*, p. 24. Also Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

23 Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 213. Also Bultmann, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 135, 313.

24 See also Stauffer, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

25 A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (New York, 1914), p. 768.

26 *Ibid.*, p. 412.

27 Jeremiah, *op. cit.*, p. 142 f.

so far as the sacrament points to the parousia (I Cor. 11:26, Luke 22:18), it points also to its blessings, among which is the resurrection. And finally, there is evidence²⁸ that the Communion was early associated with Easter.

17) The author may be right in associating the *sōma* of I Cor. 11:29 with that of 10:17. At the same time, the closest antecedent is in 11:27, just two verses away. Paul may have had both in mind.

20) The claim that the sacrament was intended only as a memorial and not as a mystery may be answered in three ways:

a. That John is, in all likelihood, one of the earliest disciples, and that his view, as the author concedes, involved mystery. On this John 6 is quite clear.

b. That Paul's view was similar to John's (see above, No. 8a). Here, again, Bultmann and Stauffer are in agreement.²⁹

c. That no New Testament writer takes issue with either John or Paul on this point, and that so far as we know it does not arise again in the Corinthian correspondence, as we

might expect it to if there were any great disagreement.

So much for the author's arguments. What of his conclusions? It would appear that his denial of the "real presence" in terms of the elements is untenable on the basis of the Scriptures. Not that Christ is bound up in these, or that the elements are to be regarded in a crass, superstitious, and materialistic manner as the Lord. This even John (6:63) is careful to avoid. We do, in the author's words, have communion "with him, not with his body and blood." But we have that communion with him *through* his body and blood.

JAMES P. BERG

28 Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

29 Bultmann, *op. cit.*, I, p. 147 f.; Stauffer, *op. cit.*, p. 163. See also Hans Lietzmann, *Mass and Lord's Supper* (Leiden, 1953-), p. 181 ff.; P. T. Forsyth, *Lectures on the Church and the Sacraments* (London, 1917), pp. 151, 215 f. This last work is especially interesting, containing a chapter by Forsyth's colleague at London, Dr. Andrews, a Free churchman. He there does what our author has tried to do, and comes out with exactly the opposite conclusions.

Book Reviews and Notices¹

A Dictionary of Pastoral Psychology. Edited by Vergilius Ferm. New York: Philosophical Library, 1955. 336 pages. \$6.

"This volume makes no pretense of exhausting a complicated subject. It is one author's attempt to select from the general field of psychology those items of interest which have some relevance to the minister's own use of psychological material—to direct his thinking in the acceptable channels of the psychological field" (p. viii). "Since this publication, in a sense, is a work of pioneering (particularly in selection and organization) it may easily suffer the shortcomings and inadequacies common to such attempts. . . . It will be understandable why there have been included . . . some entries obviously of a homiletical, philosophical and exhortative character" (pp. x-xi).

I don't know about other readers, but this one didn't find this anticipated understandability in himself. Why should the word "dictionary" be impressed for duty to be captain over a disjointed series of observations on pastoral techniques, whose only unifying character is that they all start with a letter of the English alphabet? The Jehovah-quality of some of these pastoral exhortations, particularly those which may be found in the articles on pastoral counseling, would make a sensitive counselor shudder and forever forego the question why people don't ask their ministers anything important. To continue the solid marble equipment of the reviewer who should so easily have known better: why should "Pastoral Psychology" despite its value as current coin in the booksellers' markets, be asked to pose as an acceptable category for something like urging the pastor to advise less costly coffins?

It is not at all difficult, on the other hand, to agree with the other sentences quoted above. There is no pretense to exhaustion here—the exhaustion will be real enough, but it won't be in the subject-matter; it will descend on any reader who really wanted to

learn something from this compend. And no question at all, this book "may easily suffer . . . inadequacies."

Vergilius Ferm has a much better scholarly reputation than would appear from this exhibit of card-catalogue shuffling. But why should a writer and student of contemporary Lutheran history, contemporary American theology, comparative religions, philosophical systems and history, and religious psychology, possess competence in all possible fields of learning?

In this book the articles on hospital chaplains (Protestant) by Westberg, and on Parapsychology by Dean Ferm are well written. They do not belong in a handbook of psychological terms, however, but should take their place in the forum of magazine discussion.

Disappointing is the kindest word that can be said for this firecracker that fizzled out. When the lowly pastor is invited to lay down six dollars so sorely needed for his children's shoes to buy this dud, it is he who will do the exploding when he gets the book. The Chinese beat us all to profound evaluations; here is a proverb that fits this book exactly: "Big noise on stair; nobody comes down."

GEORGE H. MUEDEKING

How to Start Counseling; Building the Counseling Program in the Local Church. By William E. Hulme. New York: Abingdon Press, 1955. 151 pages with bibliography. \$2.50.

This is an important book, written by one of Lutheranism's best-known leaders in the field of pastoral counseling, and now professor of Pastoral Theology at Wartburg Seminary. Actually, the book is misnamed. It is preferably an acceptable introduction to

1 Books reviewed or noticed in these pages may be purchased through your church's publication house.

the field of Pastoral Theology, a thoroughly welcome addition to the paucity of English titles in the field, and well slanted to the customary market of this publisher where the work of soul-care has not generally been either well understood or employed. As such, of course, it lacks completeness, omitting particularly the counseling care of the aged, who will be increasingly with us.

Taken at its face value, however, it still can be of real help, especially in directing the pastor to an enlarged insight about himself as the counselor. The book's discussion of the subterfuge of business, and the reasons for the pastor's lack of sensitive soul-care toward his own family members, is particularly well done, with a real promotion of self-understanding. We could only wish Dr. Hulme had dedicated himself to this task, to help pastors understand themselves. It would follow almost axiomatically, then, that with self-understanding would come also the ability to counsel; the mechanics of counseling would then take care of themselves. The author would be the first to tell this to us, of course.

The writing is fluent. There are some puzzling instances of lack of organization. Why is the violation of pastoral confidence to be included in the instructions for setting up a counseling room? Why is the counseling cue where the client talks about the problems of others as a bid for desired self-disclosure included with the reason people won't come for counseling? Why does counseling alcoholics appear in connection with the pastor's cultivation of devotional life? There are a number of other instances where the oversolicitous editorial scissors must have cut out the connecting train of thought. And as far as this reader is concerned he has a problem as to what "problemated" people are.

At the present time there is little or no supporting evidence for the implications in this book that a knowledge of psychology will be a help to being a counselor. In fact, as Taft reports in the January, 1955, issue of the *Psychological Bulletin*, there appears almost to be an inverse statistical correlation between the amount of training in clinical psychology and the ability to understand people. And, of course, Rogers reports much

the same experience in his Client-Centered Therapy. The reason Rogers gives is important to consider: the desire to diagnose, to apply the vast fund of psychological knowledge, becomes so insistent that responsibility is drained from the client in favor of the authoritarian figure who tells you what is wrong. Dr. Hulme would have done well to share this knowledge with his readers, who already are under the illusions of utter inferiority toward professional psychologists.

Every pastor can assist himself appreciably in his ministry by studying this book. May we take this means to encourage Dr. Hulme and his publishers to offer a detailed and serious study on the inner motivations of the pastor. It will not only make the pastor a better counselor, but will improve his ministerial relations all down the line. Dr. Hulme has demonstrated a full ability to assume this task.

GEORGE H. MUEDEKING

Ministering to the Sick. By William A. Lauterbach. Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955. 191 pages.

Part I (the first fifty pages) of this book is entitled "The Sick Call" and attempts to provide a theoretical foundation for pastoral care. Unfortunately it does not draw upon the many sound principles and practices of modern pastoral psychology. The author seems to be outside the influence of the contemporary clinical pastoral training movement.

Many suggestions are either so general or so obvious as to be of little practical help to the pastor. "... a verbatim repetition of the sermon would almost surely be too long and tiring for the patient who is seriously ill" (18). There are several instances of plainly poor mental hygiene, such as "Whatever conversation is entered into should be directed into cheerful channels" (37). The book reflects stereotyped patterns and common sense hints but is hardly a creative contribution.

Part II, "Aids for Personalized Ministration," offers thirty-five specific sermonettes for various personal problems or critical situations ranging from "One In-

jured in a Quarrel," ". . . How fortunate you have been that God has mercifully spared you from greater injury or even an untimely death," to selections for the dying, the mother of a stillborn child, etc. A large selection of Bible passages follow each type of special problem.

Unfortunately, this book does not make good competition against the many creative and well written books put out by non-Lutheran publishing houses and writers in the field of pastoral care.

DAVID BELGUM

Anxiety in Christian Experience. By Wayne E. Oates. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1955. 156 pages. \$3.

Much is being written today about the destructive emotion of anxiety, and Wayne Oates has added a significant contribution. The title of his contribution, however, is misleading. Much of the experience he describes is not Christian. Actually the book presents the Christian counterpart to egocentric anxiety.

Oates has broken anxiety down into nine different varieties: economic anxiety, finitude (eschatological) anxiety, the anxiety of grief, the anxiety of sin, legalistic anxiety, the anxiety reactions of the morally indifferent, the anxiety of the cross, the anxiety of the cross and holy dread, and anxiety and the fellowship of concern. Although this classification is arbitrary it is helpful in presenting the material. Each type of anxiety is treated in a similar manner: first, it is described; second, it is diagnosed; and third, biblical and theological references and applications are presented.

Two chapters are particularly excellent. The chapter on the morally indifferent is a much needed diagnosis of the enigmatic psychopathic personality. The chapter on the anxiety of the cross is an excellent integration of psychic disorders and the Christian message.

The chapters concerning holy dread and the fellowship of concern bring out a semantic problem. Like many others, Oates is strongly anti-Peale. He insists that peace of mind does not mean the absence of anxiety, that anxiety has its rightful place in Chris-

tian experience. There is good anxiety and bad anxiety. Among the good anxieties he lists the fear and trembling with which one works out his own salvation, the reverence or awe one experiences before the holiness of his Maker, and the concern of the fellowship of believers for the lost. The bad anxieties are the egocentric anxieties. While the reviewer has no quarrel with the author in this differentiation, he believes Mr. Peale would accept it also. It seems, therefore, that either the word anxiety should never be used without the qualifiers good or bad or their equivalents, or that we need a new word to describe one or the other.

This is not a book for laymen in general. It is analytic and descriptive rather than an exposition on how to do it. It is of particular value to pastoral counselors. Running through its pages are helpful insights into counseling techniques, even for the veteran counselor.

WILLIAM E. HULME

Clear of the Brooding Cloud. By Jack Finegan. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1953. 176 pages.

When a biblical and archeological scholar turns to writing popular meditations, in which he seeks to "discuss the application of the principles of biblical religion to the solution of the problems of everyday living," the living link between the Bible and life is made most clearly evident. The basic human problems which men of today face have changed little from biblical times. It is the merit of this slight volume that it reveals that the spiritual insights and revelation of the Bible are also pertinent to our times.

The author accomplishes this by translating biblical passages and characters and incidents into the vocabulary and experiences of the twentieth century. He seeks to make the contemporary character of the biblical message evident by relating it to present day observations as these have been described in such current literature as varied as the writings of Will Durant and Georgia Harkness at one extreme, and the autobiographical and sermon testimonies of "The Christian Century," "Reader's Digest" and present radio preaching at the other.

The book takes its title from the first of these meditations on the biblical ways of getting "Clear of the Brooding Clouds" of despondency, alcoholism and psychosomatic disease. The titles of the individual addresses point the direction of the author's thinking: "When God Seems Nowhere About," "Like the Eagle," "The Flat Places of Life," "Forget to Remember," "No Place to Hide," "Point of No Return," "Out of Weakness Made Strong," etc.

Both the preacher and the lay teacher will find that these meditations speak stimulatingly to our condition from the very heart of God's Word.

WILLIAM C. BERKEMEYER

The Challenge of Christian Stewardship. By Milo Kauffman. Scottdale, Pa.: The Herald Press, 1955. 180 pages. \$2.50.

This volume is in reality a series of lectures prepared for the "Conrad Grebel Lectureship," an annual study prepared on some subject of interest to the Mennonite Church. In his preface the author says, "If in these lectures, and through these pages, I am able to impart to the reader a little of the inspiration, the conviction, and the challenge that I received while studying, thinking, and writing on this great doctrine of Christian stewardship, I shall be happy." The author has done just that.

This book will bring forth fresh insights on stewardship. It is full of material that pastors will find useful in preparing stewardship sermons. Even though the last half of the book has some material dealing specifically with the Mennonite Church, there is inspiration and information enough to make this a book that should be on the bookshelf of most pastors. Many will disagree with the author when he writes about the kind of occupations that a Christian can or cannot hold in the practice of his stewardship, but this is only incidental in a book that covers the area of stewardship so extensively.

Mr. Kauffman tells us that stewardship is "a practical expression of one's experience with God" and that "stewardship of possessions is the economic result of a re-

ligious experience." He warns the reader that "stewardship is not a scheme of God to take something from man" and that it must not become "man's scheme for raising money for the purpose of the church." Yet he feels that "the minister who is too spiritual to preach about money is either more spiritual than Jesus or has a completely false notion about money or spirituality." When he writes of tithing, he does so with conviction, backing up his statements with many illustrations.

In this book Mr. Kauffman covers some aspects of stewardship that are seldom mentioned. He has sections on "Stewards of the Soil," "Stewards in Saving Money," "Stewards of Our Personalities," the "Christian Will," "Annuities," and a section on how stewardship "Promotes Evangelism."

In his concluding chapter on the "Blessings of Christian Stewardship" the author says, "It cannot be too strongly emphasized that God's purpose in the stewardship of man is for the good of man." We find this emphasis throughout the book. This volume is one of the finest stewardship books to be released this year.

CLYDE J. GRIMSTVEDT

Protestant Churches and Industrial America.

By Henry F. May. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948. 297 pages. \$2.50.

One of the greatest transformations in the history of the American people occurred during the three decades following the Civil War. It was between 1870 and 1900 that the change from an agrarian to an industrial economy took place. This transformation necessitated a radical readjustment in both social and economic thought and practice by every segment of American society.

This study by Mr. May is an endeavor to trace the relationship which the Protestant Church in America sustained toward this change, and the difficulties which were encountered as Christian people sought to adjust to the new order of things. The Protestantism with which the author is concerned is that represented by the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Methodists and Episcopalians, for Mr. May believes that in these five major denominations the principal

early currents of American religious history converge.

In spite of the many differences which divide these five major Protestant bodies, the author claims to have discovered a common broad social consensus among them which has exerted a powerful influence upon American thought and practice. This consensus has been fundamentally conservative in character, tending to support the status quo and willing to change only with great reluctance. As the great industrialists began to pour out their bounty for religious and charitable work the doctrines of *laissez faire* were preached and expounded with increasing vigor from pulpit and press. Those who rebelled against contemporary selfishness, materialism and ruthless exploitation were ignored, dismissed or denounced as dangerous radicals. It was at this point that the churches of America began to lose their hold on the loyalty and sympathy of labor; it was here that the tension between the church and the American labor movement had its inception.

A broad social consciousness did emerge, however, within the ranks of conservative American Protestantism, but it was due to the sledge hammer blows of a series of three bitter socio-economic upheavals rather than to any readiness by the churches to apply the Gospel to the new social circumstances. These three "earthquakes" were the railroad strike of 1877, the Haymarket riot of 1886 and the depression and labor strife of 1892-94. These serious dislocations compelled thoughtful churchmen to re-examine their traditional attitudes in an effort to find equitable and just solutions in harmony with the letter and spirit of Christian faith. The consequence of such re-evaluation was the emergence of the Social Gospel which sought to redeem the new economic order in America by bringing to bear upon it the idealism of the Christian religion. That this endeavor has been less than completely successful is attested by the continuing estrangement between the labor movement in America and the churches of our land.

As organized labor becomes an increasingly dynamic force in American life, every churchman will be compelled to inform him-

self with reference to the problems involved and the historical circumstances out of which they have derived. To this end Mr. May's study will prove invaluable. The author has thoroughly documented his treatise which brings together a vast amount of pertinent source material.

G. EVERETT ARDEN

Norsemen Found a Church. Edited by J. C. K. Preus. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1953. 427 pages. \$4.75.

The purpose of this book is to tell in a popular way the story of the transplanting of the spiritual heritage of the Evangelical Lutheran Church to the American environment, "an old heritage in a new land." The editor and his two associates, Dr. T. F. Gullixson and pastor E. C. Reinertson, and the several contributors to this volume have filled a real need and filled it well. Particularly valuable are the chapters dealing with the historical development. These writers present many interesting glimpses from the fascinating pioneer period in the early Norwegian settlements in Illinois, Wisconsin and Iowa. We follow the stream of rugged and courageous newcomers as they spanned the Mississippi River and conquered "a second frontier" in the new west. Special attention is of course given to the devoted pastors and lay people who performed the gigantic task of building congregations and meeting the many problems that presented themselves, covering a great range from how to make a synodical constitution to how to spread the Gospel to heathen nations.

Concluding chapters discuss the Americanization process, the transplanting of the heritage of music, the development of Christian education, publications, and various organizations. Most of these chapters are very brief.

Several of the historical chapters are based on fresh research and present many facts that are not readily available elsewhere, but the volume does not aim to give us that complete historical account of the Evangelical Lutheran Church for which we must still wait.

Due to the fact that there are no less than fourteen contributors the various chapters

are quite uneven in their presentation and under the circumstances some overlapping has been almost unavoidable. It appears to this reviewer that at certain places too many insignificant names and details are included whereas at other places more detailed and exact information would have been desirable; there is, for example, not a single figure to indicate the circulation of any of the many publications mentioned in chapter fourteen.

The volume is an interesting and valuable addition to our yet too fragmentary list of histories of the Lutheran churches in America.

PAUL C. NYHOLM

Zwingli and Bullinger, Selected Translations with Introductions and Notes. By G. W. Bromily. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953. 364 pages. \$5.

The writings of these two Swiss reformers have not been readily available before to the average student. As a worthy successor to the preceding volumes of this new series of Christian Classics this book will doubtless be welcomed by many. Bullinger is presented through one selection, "Of the Holy Catholic Church," while the major interests of Zwingli are represented in five well chosen selections, dealing with the clarity and certainty of the Word of God, the education of youth, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and an exposition of the Faith.

PAUL C. NYHOLM

Treasury of Philosophy. Edited by Dagobert D. Runes. New York: Philosophical Library, 1955. 1,280 pages. \$15.

Here is an ambitious attempt to cover some 400 philosophers, both oriental and western, spanning more than two millenia, giving a short biographical sketch and a few pages of the writings of each. The result is a massive volume. It will serve well as a handy reference to familiarize oneself with names of distinguished philosophers which all too often are just names. Perhaps of most value will be the fine print biographical sketches, since the writings themselves are in most cases quite arbitrarily chosen as they must be; or they are too short to be of great value. Still, they do give some sug-

gestion as to the flavor and style characteristic of each philosopher. Most of the biographical sketches are from one-half to one page in length. They record historical settings, important dates, titles of important publications, and short analyses of major ideas.

Not only is it a good reference manual, it is also a delight to pick up at odd moments for mental diversion and stimulus. To this reviewer it seemed rather odd that after so ambitious an undertaking the editor could come to no better definition of the philosophic enterprise than to say it is "the search for the indefinable" (p. xxiii).

STANLEY L. OLSEN

Foundations of Christian Knowledge. By Georgia Harkness. New York: Abingdon Press, 1955. 160 pages. \$2.75.

In spite of its imposing title, this is a modest little book. It may be described as an elementary introduction to Christian apologetics written from the point of view of a liberalism that has developed a measure of self-criticism because of the impact of biblical theology.

The author's concern is not with the content of the Christian faith but with "the grounds on which we can know what we know in the field of Christian truth." The central problem is, therefore, the problem of finding a reasonable authority for the affirmations of faith. The search leads to an analysis of the relations between theology and philosophy and between theology and the scientific method. This study of the pre-suppositions and methods of all truth-seeking is the most constructive section of the book.

The author posits four sources for Christian knowledge: revelation, the Bible, inner light, and the Christian community. In Christ is the supreme and only adequate, but not the only, revelation of God. The Bible is a source both of truth and of transforming power but only when fundamentalistic literalism is abandoned and contact is made with the living events behind the words. The Holy Spirit is connected with spirituality in general and the inner light of the mystics in particular. The Christian community, ecumenically conceived, represents Christian

truth in its vital continuity and its rich variety. Its historical creeds need not tinkering but re-interpretation and supplementation. The one central affirmation to which all sources of Christian knowledge point is: "Jesus is Lord."

Miss Harkness has written better books than this one. It gives the impression of being a collection of more or less related materials hurriedly thrown together rather than a serious project of concentrated research. As a consequence the desired "dynamic synthesis of faith and reason" is not worked out with any thoroughness. The nearest approach to such a synthesis is presented in a lengthy quotation from an ecumenical study document, *The Bible and the Church's Message*, which is based on the method of *Heilsgeschichte*. But the author shows no further familiarity with this method, and there is no reference to its representatives, such as Cullmann or Stauffer. Much of the argument echoes the debates of yesterday, involving such thinkers as Temple, Brightman, Dewey, and Wieman, while the burning issues of today receive scant attention. Barth is still in the foreground, while Bultmann gets only a passing reference. Heim's profound restatement of the issue between theology and science is mentioned only in a disparaging footnote. The most disappointing chapter is the one on the Holy Spirit, where the author's preoccupation with mysticism obscures almost completely the biblical doctrine. Prenter's *Spiritus Creator* would have provided a needed corrective.

Miss Harkness is a liberal who opposes both the naturalists and the fundamentalists but is willing to learn from the conservatives and the neo-orthodox. That she is more at home in philosophy of religion than in theology proper is indicated, among other things, by her use of "dogmatic" as a synonym for "bigoted."

T. A. KANTONEN

Religion and the Moral Life. By A. Campbell Garnett. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1955. 223 pages. \$3.50.

This is a solid book, excellently and gently written. Those who have been at-

tracted to Garnett's other works (*Reality and Value*, *A Realistic Philosophy of Religion*, *God in Us*, *The Moral Nature of Man*) will not be disappointed in this last venture.

The author's primary concern is to show that traditional religion, divested of what he calls "adventitious accretions" provides the most satisfactory support for the moral life. The first part of the book (to this reviewer, the most significant part) is devoted to a critical analysis and appraisal of the secularist and humanist faiths. He defines religion broadly as an attitude of devotion to an object (or principle) regarded as being supremely worthy. On this basis, secularism cannot be called a religion since it holds to no value as being supreme over all others. Humanism is a religion because it regards universal mankind itself as being of supreme worth. Fascism and communism he regards as religions too, only of an idolatrous kind. They fall under the category of humanist religions, but fall short of inspiring devotion to an object of supreme worth, e.g., the state. He prefers not to call "democratic humanism" idolatrous, because in intention at least it seeks the same moral goals as traditional religion. Its desire to cut loose from traditional supernaturalism accounts for its nontheistic character. He is much attracted to the "non-authoritarian" religion of Erich Fromm because of the latter's insistence upon "a frame of orientation and an object of devotion" and upon the need for cultivating "productive love" for all mankind. Still, he rejects humanism and for the following reasons: (1) it cannot make sufficiently concrete and vivid the object of supreme worth, i.e., Humanity, and (2), it cannot call forth the kind of devotion to its object that would draw out full commitment to the ethical ideal. Humanist religion, he says, may be all right for intellectuals who are already well advanced morally, but it is no religion for sinners.

These chapters (2-4) constitute some of the most incisive analyses and criticisms of secularism and humanism this reviewer has ever read. They are well worth the price of the book.

The chapter on Faith and Tradition is something else again. Here the author seeks

to combine an appreciation of the Christian tradition with a strong negative prejudice against the whole theological development in that tradition. It is evident that he has no special yen for theology. Venerable doctrines like those of divine creation, omnipotence and judgment he thinks are bad accretions, taken over from Greek philosophy, and have involved the church in futile speculation, besides involving the soul in gloomy self-preoccupation relative to one's own salvation. Religion is loving devotion to God and man. Theology has served only to confuse and frustrate that devotion. Pauline theology serves no better. Paul failed to understand his own religious experience. He should have known that the transformation that came over him when he confronted Christ had nothing to do with getting right with a "punitive God." The theology of the atonement is therefore an answer to a pseudo-problem. It was this sort of theology that made of Kierkegaard a "tragic figure" of gloom and melancholy.

What is there in the Christian tradition that attracts the author? To his mind, the heart and core of that tradition is a simple moral theism. The following four statements are the essentials:

That man is loved of God. That man should love God with all his heart. That man should love his neighbor as himself. That in such love to God and man the human spirit is made whole (p. 117).

While certain doctrines like the Trinity, immortality and revelation (he rejects Brunner's distinction between general and special revelation, insisting it is all of one piece; all is saving revelation) are supporting "accretions" to simple theism, they are not integral to it.

In short, what we have in this book is a restatement in modern dress of the ethical idealism of Immanuel Kant. Kant's rooting of theology in the moral consciousness; his insistence that the moral conscience is a priori, thereby making morality both universal and necessary; his "kingdom of ends"; his teleological orientation given to the natural order; the autonomy of the will; and other doctrines are all here, cogently

restated and given distinctly Christian coloring.

The last two chapters entitled *The Christian Faith* and *The Christian Ethic* would have made for better reading had he not been so negatively critical in his previous chapter on Faith and Tradition. In these last two chapters he strikes a more authentically Christian note. Here he writes like a committed Christian.

Lutherans would do well to read this book. They will find themselves confirmed, if they are not so minded already, in the view that ethical idealism and the reformation faith do not accord well with each other. But they will also find themselves jarred loose from a too easygoing acceptance of that faith.

STANLEY L. OLSEN

The Bent World: A Christian Examination of East-West Tensions. By J. V. Langmead Casserley. New York: Oxford University Press, 1955. ix + 286 pages. \$4.

It is probably a good thing that one can agree with the overall thesis and intent of a book even when disagreeing with many particulars in the argument. Dr. Casserley takes as his thesis in *The Bent World* that "*Western civilization in its secular phase is half-Marxist already*" (p. 13). This is why many defenders of the West find it so difficult to answer the Marxist challenge. Only as we understand Marxism and the point at which the real challenge to our civilization is made will a clear and positive answer be possible. The intent of the book is to achieve this understanding of Marxism and to provide an answer based upon "really deep and worth-while affirmations."

With all of this I agree whole-heartedly. But I do not feel that the book achieves its purpose. To begin with, the analysis of Marxism is superficial, failing to go beneath the surface of the Marxist theory of class conflict, to take seriously such concepts as the treatment of labor as a commodity, the alienation of the worker from his tools, and the relationship between political and economic power in class structures. His appraisal of Communist strategy, moreover,

suffers from a failure to comprehend the fact that while the strategy of the non-Communist Social Democrats can be understood in terms of Marx, the political dynamism of Russian Communism derives from Lenin and Stalin and their drastic re-orientation of strategy and tactics. Finally, Dr. Casserley does not take into sufficient account the fact that the greatest successes of Communism not only in Russia but elsewhere have come in peasant countries and under circumstances where the disorganization of war could be manipulated to the advantage of revolution.

While the apparent basic flaw of the book is superficiality of analysis, I suspect that there is a deeper reason. I had a constant uneasy sense of a certain haste to provide the reader with moral judgments before the facts were fully collected, a kind of unwillingness to carry on a rigid scientific analysis of the evidence, even if it should run counter to Anglican theological conceptions. The book has too easy a moral formula; its answers are a little too tidy.

There is, for example, at no point in the analysis a thorough account of the institutional forms of the Western democratic polities, as distinguished from a consideration of their theoretical assumptions. In fact, the entire discussion of Western civilization is judgmental rather than diagnostic. A critical study of the history of Western technics and economic activity might temper our judgment on the modern "obsession" with these with a little charity.

A kind of Anglican aristocratic attitude permeates some of the judgments, furthermore, such as the interesting definition that "Civilization is what happens when an economy is so successful as to provide men with leisure time in which they are released from preoccupation with the merely economic problem of survival, liberated from the influence of merely economic pressures, and set free to busy themselves about more permanent values and more absolute ends" (p. 168). When one puts this statement together with one that asserts that only a bishop can make a bishop and some of the claims about dogma, one begins to suspect that it is a rather narrow kind of Christianity that is going to save the West.

There is also certain statistical nonsense and some bad arithmetic on divorce on page 202. Even if one granted him all the questionable assumptions, the ten-year total of divorces would fall short by about one-third of the 10 per cent figure he claims.

One can understand these shortcomings when one discovers Dr. Casserley carrying on a battle over the nature of science on a battlefield which most scientists have long since abandoned. We do not claim for scientific laws that they are "absolute or universal truths," but unless they do have some relative validity and generality the very kind of problem he assigns to us to solve would actually be beyond our power. If Dr. Casserley had spent less time setting this straw man on fire and more time on rigorous critical analysis (i.e., on science), his book would have provided some genuine beacon lights for a confused civilization.

The upshot of all this is that since Dr. Casserley has really failed to get his target properly into focus, the Christian answer he proposes, one which in the larger sense we would all accept, fails to hit its mark. A book like the one Dr. Casserley proposed to write is urgently needed. I wish he had been a little less impatient, a little more rigorous in his analysis. Then perhaps his performance would have measured up to his promise.

KARL HERTZ

The Dawn of the Post-Modern Era. By Elwyn Judson Trueblood. New York: Philosophical Library, 1954. 198 pages. \$3.75.

This volume aims to present the challenge man faces in a claimed new age in human history and to survey possible ways of meeting that challenge, particularly in the light of Christian teachings. E. (Elwyn not Elton) J. Trueblood, Professor of Religion and Philosophy at Limestone College, Gaffney, S. C., states that his own searchings and those of his students led him to deeper and deeper concern and study of this matter and eventually to this publication of the results, limited as they must be, for those similarly concerned.

The thesis is that atomic power is of de-

cisive importance yet "the split atom would not be quite so epochally determinative if we did not also have a split humanity"; also that modern man "has been trying in cumulatively self-contradictory ways to meet more time, more space, and more energy, with less personalism, less morality, and less religion."

In the light of Christian teachings and of human personality at its highest both individually and socially, the author examines the most significant aspects of the post-modern world. He seeks guidance for the future for man in his various established and emergent social institutions as well as in his broader cultural areas. He presents vivid and forceful evaluations: "Cumulative idolatries . . . have included the more subtle idols of the self, and the more treacherous idols of the church, as well as the more glamorously publicized idols of the world." "One of the most outlandish rationalizations of the American people is the notion that our communicating processes are entirely objective, unprejudiced, and free from bias."

The author makes suggestions for various institutional and cultural areas as to how man can develop along a fourth dimension, the cosmic-eternal continuum, similar to the fourth dimension of the physical world.

The author's diagnosis of the situation is excellent. He presents a forceful and moving picture of imperative needs in this era. Since he covers so much ground, however, he shows weakness in some areas, as in his brief analysis of present-day criminological needs. His parallels between the physical and spiritual world are particularly effective.

Certainly justified is the book's general call for a revolutionary emphasis upon moral and spiritual values, as in Hagedorn's *The Bomb That Fell on America*. Few of his specific recommendations merit disagreement, though there are some, as in his statement: "White man's effort toward survival and welfare does not contemplate the encouragement of intermarriage, nor even the full social intermingling of white and colored peoples: indeed, no race desires such unnatural mixtures." (Intermarriage should hardly be encouraged in America in the light of difficulties encountered in our culture, but

calling it an "unnatural mixture" seems definitely inaccurate.) Some of his suggestions seem rather vague or superficial, and a deep Christian evangelical dynamic often seems lacking.

On the whole, this book presents a vivid and stimulating challenge for consideration of matters vital to man's very existence, and does suggest in spite of some flaws, many greatly needed steps for meeting this challenge.

HERMAN KEITER

Martin Luther, Man of God. Selected Essays by Henry Lindemann. New York: Exposition Press, 1955. 102 pages.

Dr. Lindemann, a pastor of the American Lutheran Church, is a well-known author and lecturer. One of his previous books, "Love Is Strong as Death," was well received in religious and secular publications in this country. He has written numerous articles on Martin Luther and the Reformation.

"Martin Luther" is the result of some 50 articles which the author wrote for a number of church papers throughout the years. These brief essays bring a wealth of material, some of it not accessible to readers whose reading is limited to English biographies of the Reformer. The short sketches are written in clear and simple language, but always stimulating and interesting. They can be easily understood by both pastor and layman. Many of the essays can be used for family reading. Lutherans are being urged again and again to get acquainted with their Reformer. For many, Schwiebert may be too technical, Bainton and Boehmer too long, some others may be too "Lutheran" or too historical or too dull. But this book is neither technical, nor long, nor dull, nor does it attempt "to hide the wart over his right eye." It is a good book for fathers and mothers and young people.

WALTER G. TILLMANNS

Young People's Hebrew History. By Louis Wallis. New York: Philosophical Library, 1953. 114 pages. \$2.50.

The writer of this book has become well known to all readers of the *Christian Century*

within the year 1954. He is the author of a series of articles which were entitled: "Friendly Challenge to the Churches." Another series began to appear later in the year under the title "Churches in Serious Intellectual Position."

In this book, the author writes a history of the Hebrew people and completely omits the person and work of Moses. In the evolution of monotheism, the prophet Elijah assumes the place which Moses occupies in the Scriptures. "The significance of Elijah for Hebrew religion and world religion is hardly realized, even today, for the simple reason that his originality and the circumstances of his day are obscured by the orthodox assumption that he was merely repeating monotheistic precepts that had been revealed to Israel upon a desert mountain hundreds of years before" (p. 63).

The author views the history of Israel as a constant struggle between an aristocratic Canaanite Baalism and the religion of Yahweh. He takes these two groups as representatives of two social and economic elements within a single society. The worshipers of Yahweh are portrayed as country people whom the followers of Baal are anxious to exploit. The author gives priority to Baalism in the early history of Israel. Even King David is made out to be a servant of the wealthy and greedy votaries of Baal. Not until the sixth century B.C. and later does Yahweh gain the ascendancy within Israel. Ethical monotheism is a late development in Israel's religion. The Pentateuch becomes no more than a myth which seeks to give antiquity to these beliefs (p. 75).

This book is intended to serve as a textbook for young people within churches today. From the standpoint of content, every positive and evangelical pastor would consider it most inadequate.

JOHN V. HALVORSON

To See Peter. A Lutheran Minister's Journey to the Eternal City. By Richard Baumann. Translated from the German by John M. Oesterreicher. New York: David McKay, 1954. 192 pages. \$3.

Some favorable attention has been given to this book in certain Protestant circles, and

the character of the book has often been misunderstood because the sub-title in the English translation is misleading. Apart from this, however, the contents should have made it clear that it is not a Lutheran but a Roman Catholic book. The author reports a journey to Rome during the recent Holy Year, and in connection with his account he discusses Roman faith and practice. This he does not as a Lutheran, for Baumann was admonished, tried, and defrocked by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Wuerttemberg in 1947 for teaching doctrines and observing practices which are Roman Catholic. In this book, published in Germany three years after his dismissal as a Protestant clergyman, he expressly defends such Roman doctrines and practices as the sacrifice of the Mass, the invocation of saints, good works, indulgences, and mariolatry. His views cannot possibly be reconciled with the second part of the Augsburg Confession, and the very fact that Roman Catholic publishers have printed and reprinted the book speaks for itself.

HENRY P. SUHR

A Theology of the Living Church. By Harold L. DeWolf. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953. 383 pages.

A glance at the table of contents impresses the reader with the scope of this one volume on systematic theology. It is ambitious and formidable. So broad a coverage must of necessity become spotty and thin at times.

The author has two basic convictions in regard to theology as he launches into his discussion: (1) theology must be reinterpreted in and to every age, (2) theology must always be critical. The author's methodology differs from traditional dogmatics, especially in presenting the different dogmatic problems. Usually he begins with a general statement of the problem. Next comes a historical review, followed by solutions that he rejects. Lastly he suggests some affirmative solutions or a goal toward which the church should aim. The method is good and easy to follow. This reader feels there are certain elementary and historical observations included that are of little value beyond swelling the volume. But, no doubt, the author had his own purpose in this.

The author writes from the background

of a liberal theological tradition. But he is not a rationalist. He faces theological problems squarely and does not hesitate to ask embarrassing questions when such arise.

The author begins with the discussion of reason and certainty, and reason and revelation. Revelation is received by reason. Man reflects upon it. Who, asks the author, decides what is revelation? Sincere minds through faith even arrive at different ideas in regard to the authority of revelation. There can be no such distinction as general and special revelation to theistic faith. All activity is of God, one is no more direct than the other. Special revelation is just something that strikes us in a *special* way, a moment of deep religious experience.

The authority of Scripture is a much disputed fact, with different authority ascribed to different portions of Scripture by different people. Such authority must be found in the overall religious message, especially in the spirit and teachings of Jesus Christ.

The logic of religious experience leads to belief in one God. God's omnipresence is not a special attribute but expresses that God is everywhere operative and creative. Nothing is hidden from Him. In relation to God time cannot be segmented as is space. God's real *being* is only present. By being and creating God makes time to be real.

God is a providential God. Neither God nor man is wholly subject to law (in spite of some scientists). Miracles are a possibility and must be evaluated in the full context of God's Providence. The author is also positive in regard to the existence of angels.

When it comes to dealing with evil, he, like most authors, ends in the realm of mystery. Though he has no rational answer for evil, he holds that the historical witness of revelation encompasses evil and suffering within the redemptive concept of God's plan. "Because God lives, evil never has the last word" (page 141).

God, the Creator, has made man with a created, limited freedom. God as the creator of all things also is active in the creation of souls. Human bodies are the means of communication of souls. Body and soul relation holds high purpose in the divine plan.

The author finds no definition of sin in Scripture. There cannot be a "state of sin"

(in the sense of original sin) because sin is always sin of volition. Augustine's abstraction of original sin reflects Platonic modes of thought. It "shocks our reason," is "incomprehensible." "When it is further considered how little meaning can be left to the affirmation that God is 'good,' 'just' or a 'loving Father,' if He is thought to hold little children guilty of sin committed by a man, long dead and completely unknown to them, we must say that such a doctrine of original sin is both irrational and blasphemous" (page 198). Yet, the author acknowledges that sin began with Adam and Eve. They are symbols. All men follow them.

Man has the "image of God" because he is (1) a spiritual being, has (2) a sense of moral obligation.

To this reviewer the author's Christology seems one of the weaker aspects of the book. He seems to arrive nowhere. He asks some searching questions about the Virgin Birth but does not reject it. Though he condemns orthodox (and neo-orthodox) Christology as Docetism, and though he rejects Bultmann's *Christ of Faith*, he ends with Christ as a *man*, who identified his purpose with God, or, viewed from the God-side, as a sort of emanation of the Word, which is the "rationale of all being." Here, it seems, the shades of liberalism appear.

When it comes to the cross, he rightly holds that there is no systematic doctrine of the atonement in Scripture. But it does not necessarily follow that the account of blood-sacrifice and cleansing is "a quaint and alien figure of speech" (page 259). The atonement, or reconciliation (he prefers), he argues, lies rather in the total life of Jesus, including the resurrection. But objectively evaluated does this total life not include what is implied by such "quaint and alien figure of speech?" Though the author claims that he does not deny an objective atonement (see pages 268-269) the impression is certainly left that the atonement ("at-one-event") is a psychological reconciliation. But he moves closer to the conservative position again when he observes that it is God's guilt-sharing through his self-identification with sinners in Christ (page 268).

His discussion of the Holy Spirit is warm and constructive. The doctrine of the Trinity he classifies as important, but would prefer to use "mode" instead of "person." This does not imply any "modalism" in the historical sense as he accepts the eternal distinctions within the Godhead. The doctrine of the Last Judgment needs reformulation, the author holds, in order that we may help clarify somewhat the paradox of a loving, forgiving Father and eternal damnation. God's love and judgment must never be separated. "The judgment is irrevocable. But man's relation to it is changed when . . . changed from disobedience to faith" (page 286). The author seems to imply that such change may take place after physical death.

Dealing finally with the doctrine of the sacraments, the Church, prayer, etc., the author completes a task well done. Though moving from a liberal platform, the author is not satisfied with dogmatically rational answers. Consequently, he frequently finds himself in a theological dead end.

The author is to be commended for the fine use he makes of Scripture without yielding to the proof text method. Often one senses a spirit of devotion and worship running through deep theological delineations and a well-balanced emphasis of piety. Another aspect appreciated by this reader is the author's ability to relate his theological discussion to everyday life as well as contemporary science, psychology, medicine, etc.

This contemporary treatment should be, to pastors and students alike, a challenge and a good backdrop against which to re-evaluate one's own position, be this orthodox, super-orthodox, neo-orthodox or rationalistically orthodox.

The volume is well documented and includes an extensive bibliography.

JAMES J. RAUN

Life Together. By Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Translated and with an Introduction by John W. Doberstein. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954. 122 pages. \$1.75.

Life Together is just what its title suggests, "a consideration of a number of precepts and directions that the Scriptures pro-

vide for our life together under the Word." It grew directly out of the author's experience of life together in an "illegal" seminary established by the Confessing Church. Rooted in the concreteness of this life situation and based on the precepts of the Bible, this book is certainly relevant to an age when there is a tendency to take Christian fellowship as a matter of fact, and to structure the fellowship on sociological, economic, and psychological precepts.

The meaning of the Christian community springs from the biblical and Reformation message of the justification of man through grace alone. The very existence of the community is a matter of grace. It is a community because of, through, and in Jesus Christ. Because of Jesus Christ, a Christian needs others to speak God's Word to him. Through Jesus Christ, he can come to his brother in peace. In Jesus Christ, he is united with his brother "wholly and for all eternity." Therefore, the community is not a wish dream that we must realize; rather it is a "reality created by God in which we may participate." Also, it is not a human, but a spiritual reality. It is not based on the desires of the human mind, but rather on the Word of God in Jesus Christ; it is not eros, but agape.

Life together is spelled out in relationship to others in common worship, i.e., "The Day With Others"; in solitude, i.e., "The Day Alone"; in service, i.e., "Ministry"; and in "Confession and Communion." Since the basis of community is justification by grace, the expression of community is ministry—the ministry of "holding one's tongue," "of meekness," "of listening." It is in confession of sin to our brother that we "break through" to the fellowship of sinners, the Cross, New Life, and Certainty. Communion then becomes the "superlative fulfillment of Christian fellowship."

The reviewer is both refreshed and humbled by the reading of this book; refreshed by the simple, direct, and meaningful presentation of biblical precepts, and humbled by the shallowness of his own experience of life together. With no apparent theological or ecclesiastical bone to chew, the author has been free to give us some choice meat. I suggest you eat it slowly.

JAMES H. HANSON

The Cross and the Eagle. By Julius Berstl. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1955. 319 pages. \$3.50.

This novel has its strength and its weakness in the sweeping panoramic style in which it is written. When the reader finishes the novel the after-glow of the world of Rome in Paul's time leaves a lingering effective impression. The descriptions of Paul's last days in the underground dungeon, of the children of martyred Christians picking among the remains of their parents and loved ones to find a chance keepsake, of the orgiastic revellings of Nero, are all well done. But the weakness shows itself in the looseness of the novel's structure which at times seems no more than a running commentary on the book of Acts. The best portrayed character is Nero and his heathen followers. Paul's characterization seems to be a surface treatment. His speeches are often stilted and his actions contrived. There is no sensitivity to the complexity of his nature and one has the feeling that blocks of words from his epistles have been lifted out and placed into the structure of the novel with but slight literary mortar to hold them together. In trying to cover so much material in such a comparatively few pages there is no opportunity for an artistic molding and building up of scene and atmosphere.

This reviewer is not an authority on the scholarliness of the research though it certainly appears to be a sound appraisal of the age. If one is looking for a readable novel that gives background material for a better understanding and appreciation of the crisis of the Christian Church in the time of Paul this is a good book to read. If one is looking for a novel which will stand on its own as a work of art the reading of the book may prove a slight disappointment.

R. W. LUTNES

The Unfaithful. By Ewald Mand. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1954. 292 pages. \$3.75.

This novel could well have been sub-titled, "The Portrait of a Prophet as a Young Man." More than just another story making more colorful one of the many colorful episodes of the Old Testament, it should

be read by the theologian and pastor as well as the housewife.

The treatment given to the prophet Hosea is realistic, not romantic or sentimental. Hosea is not a static figure idealistically pictured from vision to vision. He has glands instead of glamour and his prophecy comes out of his own life, even though full recognition is given to the inspiration of God. It is out of the complexities of God's sovereign will and man's freedom, of the varied significance of everyday events guarded and guided by a living God, that the prophecy arises. Hosea is a tragic figure. He is a sensitive figure. Apart from the world and yet a part of it, responding and reacting to a Zilpah and Gomer, the two women that most control him, his frustrations are used by the God who haunts the pages.

Through the entire story the author is master of his materials. He is able to maintain a detached attitude toward his writing which results in a beautiful artistic restraint. Only when he pictures Hosea as actually giving the words of prophecy is there any uncertainty in his writing, probably an honest admission that even in the freedom given to a novelist there is a holy of holies concerning biblical inspiration that even the pen cannot break through. The pressures of the political and religious conditions of the time are pictured in a proper perspective and throughout the novel are found fresh imageries that maintain an evenly effective tone.

Usually it would be said that in order to understand such a novel the reader should first read the book of Hosea in the Old Testament. It is to the credit of Ewald Mand that it can be also said that to understand that particular book of the Old Testament one should read "The Unfaithful."

R. W. LUTNES

The Flood and Noah's Ark. By André Parrot. New York: The Philosophical Library, 1955. 76 pages. \$2.75.

The Tower of Babel. By André Parrot. New York: The Philosophical Library, 1955. 75 pages. \$2.75.

These excellent little monographs are the first in a series of *Studies in Biblical Ar-*

chaology projected by the French publishers Delachaux & Niestle, Neuchatel and Paris. The author is the famous excavator of Mari on the middle Euphrates which has yielded such phenomenal results bearing on the history and language of the patriarchal period of the Bible. The English translation is the work of Edwin Hudson and is well done. Both volumes represent the best available conclusions drawn from the archaeological, historical and epigraphical materials.

The Flood and Noah's Ark consists of three chapters with numerous subdivisions. Chapter I deals with the documentary references and the archaeological evidences of the flood. Chapter II is concerned with the ark of Noah and goes into matters of Mesopotamian navigation, iconographic representations, the place where the ark came to rest, and the attempt to locate the ark. The final chapter takes up the problem of the religious significance of the deluge story.

The Tower of Babel follows the same general plan. Chapter I treats the literary and epigraphic evidence together with certain references in the accounts of ancient travelers. Chapter II details the archaeological materials and is an excellent study of the famous Ziggurats of Mesopotamia. Chapter III deals with the representations of the tower of Babel in art and is most interesting. In the last chapter the author discusses briefly the theological interpretations of the episode. Parrot's explanation of the Ziggurat and the tower of Babel is most captivating and significant. He holds that it was the "cathedral of antiquity." Thus he writes, "I had come to the conclusion that the Tower of the Scriptures was not an expression of man's pride. Instead of a clenched fist raised in defiance towards Heaven, I saw it rather as a hand stretched out in supplication, a cry to heaven for help" (p. 9). This volume is a popularization of the author's extensive book *Ziggurats et Tour de Babel*, published in 1949.

Both books are profusely illustrated—a most valuable feature. They are well documented and there is contained in each an excellent bibliography for those who may want to go further in their studies. They can be recommended without reservation to

college and seminary classes and to interested laymen, since they are devoid of technical details, and present the unvarnished facts so clearly and concisely. They will doubtless remain standard for a long time to come.

J. M. MYERS

The Drama of the Book of Revelation. By John Wick Bowman. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1955. 159 pages. \$2.50.

The author himself states, "This little volume represents an endeavor to provide a wholesome guidebook to the most abused writing in the Christian Scriptures" (p. 7). The book of Revelation has been considered by many capable and honest Christian scholars as an enigma. John W. Bowman, a professor at the San Francisco Theological Seminary, believes that the fantastic interpretations given the book is due to a misunderstanding of the *structure* of the book. The thesis of Bowman's book is that the "key" to the book of Revelation is to conceive of it as a *drama*. He, therefore, divides Revelation into seven acts with seven scenes in each, a prologue and an epilogue. Superimposed on the drama is the form of a letter; namely, an opening salutation (1:4-6) and a closing benediction (22:21). The appearance as a letter would give a personal touch to a vital message which the Christians urgently needed to hear.

Although written as a play with certain features similar to the current Greek and Roman drama, John had no intention that it should be produced on the stage. According to Bowman, John was presenting in dramatic form, with concrete images, the same gospel message that others had presented in the literary forms of "gospel" and "letter."

The unique feature of Bowman is not his exegesis, though his comments are helpful, being based on scholarly research, but his consistent application to the book of the form of the drama. He follows slavishly the number "7," which represents perfection to the Semitic mind, in the division of his scenes and acts. He makes the interludes or extra passages (1:9-20; chs. 4 and 5;

8:2-6; etc.) scenic data or "props" on the stage. It is a challenging presentation.

The interpretation by Bowman follows the symbolic view. Revelation, therefore, is not to be understood as dealing with actual events. It gives us pictures of the "working out of the gospel on the plane of human affairs and its consummation in the salvation of the Church" (p. 7). Bowman's view leads him to deny literal interpretations which he thinks are foreign to the drama—he wants to "penetrate to the depth of his message and its universal application" (p. 67). Certain eternal principles of God's moral government become evident; such as the sovereign control by God, the self-destructiveness of evil, the futility of mankind's labors apart from God, and the ultimate triumph of Christ and the Church.

The period covered by the book of Revelation, according to Bowman, is from the Incarnation to the end of history. The acts of the drama are recapitulations of the same period. Some acts have more details and other acts are from a new standpoint. "Acts III and IV, and V and VI form two couplets, all of which are merely elaborations of the eschatological motif first presented in Scene 6 of Act II" (p. 63). In the same way Acts I and VII are complimentary pictures of the church on the plane of history, the former stressing the church's imperfections and the latter its triumph. The Millennium, to Bowman, is the epoch of the church's entire life on earth and that the Old Heaven and the Old Earth are *now* passing away, being replaced by the New Heaven and the New Earth through the new birth (John 3), the ethical renewal (p. 141). In his interpretation the Millennium, the Great Tribulation and the Battle of Armageddon are agelong and cover the entire period from Bethlehem to the end of time.

The book by Bowman is intended to be a "popular" treatment, understandable to the intelligent layman. The book suffers because of brevity with only seventy pages of explanation. The biblical text, a paraphrase by Bowman, is presented for easy reference on the page opposite the comments. Another

helpful feature to the student of Revelation is the abundance of biblical references cited.

JOHN M. NESS

New Essays in Philosophical Theology.

Edited by Antony Flew and Alasdair Macintyre. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955. 274 pages. \$4.75.

Perhaps the easiest way to get at the essential nature of this volume will be by quoting two sentences from its preface. Both deal with the underlying unity that binds these essays together.

"The first thing which all the contributors have in common is a familiarity with and a great indebtedness to the recent revolution in philosophy."

The nature of the "revolution" the editors have in mind is indicated in the second essay in the book. There J. J. C. Smart writes, "Philosophy . . . is not the discovery of profound truths about the universe, unattainable by the special sciences. It is the logical investigation of the concepts of common sense, of science, of history, of ethics, of law, and . . . of religion and theology."

To many readers this point of view will mean logical positivism. But the editors are at pains to reject that identification. At least part of their basis for that rejection appears in their statement of the book's second unifying factor.

"The second thing which the contributors share is a concern with theological questions, and a conviction that these call for serious and particular treatment. (Whereas the Logical Positivists used to reject all theology *holus-bolus* as so much meaningless metaphysics.)"

This common concern, however, does not indicate any common theological point of view. The contributors are divided almost evenly between Christians and non-Christians. The majority of the Christians, incidentally, represent the Anglican communion. It may jolt one out of a sort of theological provincialism to discover that four of the contributors are from Australia or New Zealand.

This collection of essays represents a debate carried on in the context of these two common concerns. Some of them are from

discussions that appeared in the pages of philosophical journals. Others were contributions to theological debates presented by the British Broadcasting Company Third Programme. The ones prepared for radio presentation are particularly lucid examples of the methods of the new philosophy, since the nature of the audience seems to have discouraged the use of esoteric philosophical vocabulary. Also, the give and take of the debate is helpful in clarifying the points at issue.

Among these essays there are four that seem to me to be of particular interest. Chapters I and II present the fundamental context in which the rest of the discussion is to be carried on. They are in the form of dialogues and provide a clear and easily understood introduction to the confrontation of religion and philosophy in contemporary thought.

From a more particularly theological point of view Chapter III, entitled "The Existence of God," and Chapter VI, entitled "Theology and Falsification," are noteworthy. They are concerned with the relationship of faith and reason in the knowl-

edge of God, and while the religious man may regard the primacy of faith as obvious, those who are concerned with Christian apologetics will be interested in the major place that is given to faith by the logicians. The book might even prove to be a useful corrective for those who have been tempted to offer up faith as a peace offering to the scientific spirit.

At the same time it should be noted that the way of logical analysis is primarily a negative way. While it notes the significance of faith this study does not add to the specific content of that faith. This is especially evident in the book's final chapters which deal with miracles, visions, and death.

If modern philosophy and theology should ever achieve the sort of synthesis that Thomas Aquinas effected between medieval Christianity and Aristotelianism this will be an historic volume. But even though nothing like that happens this book still merits our interest. It is a good introduction to the attempt at greater mutual understanding that is being carried on in our day by Christian thought and the new philosophy.

JOHN D. GARHART

